The Washington Monthly

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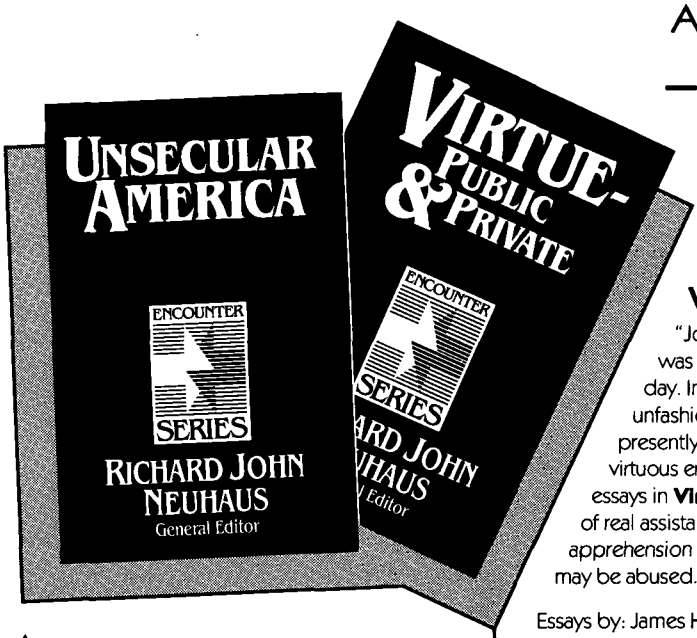

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LETTERS

What have we done?

Shame on *The Washington Monthly*. Journalism, as understood by the majority of the American people, is clearly not your forte. No wonder the public continues to lose faith in the media. How could you publish an article about Mayor Marion Barry Jr. ["A Dream Deferred," Juan Williams, July-August] that is solely based on the compilation of stories and opinions over the past eight years with no follow up to determine if those stories and opinions had merit? If the writer had done what should be done, good research and interviews with the parties named, he would have learned that none of the accusations regarding the mayor has ever led to more than presumed guilt without the benefit of trial by a jury of his peers. Our judicial system, I was raised and taught to believe, assumes innocence until proven guilty by one's peers. Can you tell me when and who chose Mr. Williams or *The Washington Monthly* as the judge and jury of the mayor? Clearly not the voters.

Too bad that once again shoddy journalism has reared its ugly head in an attempt to malign a mayor who has done more for the District of Columbia in seven and a half years than all of the commissioners who had been appointed by the presidents of the United States and approved by Congress in the previous 100 years.

Walter Washington, the first elected mayor of this city, was clearly a man for his time. Someone had to have the quiet fortitude to move us from under the yoke of the "master" who did not always have the city's best interest at heart.

With that awesome achievement behind us, Marion Barry, with his sense of the value and importance of a "strengthened financial picture," "improved image of the city," a "summer jobs program" for all of our youth which gives them a solid grounding in the real world of work, and a "booming downtown," has taken the District of Columbia far beyond what anyone ever expected in such a short period of time. Even those who would have been called "master" in another time and place have recognized these achievements and come to the aid of the city's desire for greater independence and full authority to determine its destiny.

In addition, there has been no shirking of responsibility by the Barry administration when it comes to recognizing that more needs to be done regarding neighborhood revitalization and the completion of the Metro's green line.

But surely no good businessperson can deny that if an administration supports the development of downtown, then that same administration can ask for, and more than likely get, support in return for the development of the surrounding neighborhoods. And this is beginning to happen.

The Hechinger Mall expansion in Northeast is moving forward. Ground was recently broken for a shopping complex on the H street corridor. Neighborhood revitalization offices have been opened on Georgia Avenue, N.W., Good Hope Road, Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, S.E., and 14th and U Street, N.W. The recently completed Frank D. Reeves Municipal Center is breathing new life into the Shaw area in Northwest and construction, as 7th Street, N.W. and M Street, S.E. show, on the metro's green line is moving forward.

We don't live in Shangri-la and we all know that the District of Columbia, like most urban areas, is no heaven. There is still much to be done to assure an improved quality of the life for all of our citizens.

On the other hand, it has been said that "he that is without sin, let him cast the first stone." What have you, *The Washington Monthly* or Mr. Juan Williams, done for the District of Columbia lately?

ANNETTE SAMUELS
Washington, D.C.
Ms. Samuels is press secretary to Mayor Barry.

Juan Williams replies:

I'm glad that there are some revitilization projects being planned as Marion Barry finishes his eighth year as mayor. But his record of failure in the areas of education, neighborhood development, prison reform, transportation, and public housing is well documented. The defense that Barry has not yet been convicted by a jury is another sign of how low the political debate

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has sunk in the city. We spend time and energy watching to see if Barry will be caught while the opportunity to exercise compassionate black government goes to waste. In response to your final question about what Juan Williams and *The Washington Monthly* have done for Washington, we, respectively, wrote and published the article.

Flak for all reasons

"For Immediate Release: Four Ways to Sell Your Senator," [Steven Waldman, June], was a charming, if inexpensive shot at a profession I called my own for a number of years. To suggest that press secretaries spend most of their time hacking out press releases is about as accurate as saying reporters spend most of their time writing stories. I loved my eight years as a reporter, and I loved the next eight as a press secretary. In the same spirit of humor as "For Immediate Release" I felt compelled to pen the attached:

If we're not staring into our word processors creating the big lie, what are we doing? A sampling:

Traffic Cop. For an average state, a press secretary has a stable of a couple of dozen home-state reporters based in Washington. Add in 30 or so dailies, 150 weeklies, and 250 broadcast outlets to deal with by mail or telephone. On any given day when Congress is in session, the press secretary is fielding requests for a piece of the senator's time from half the Washington-based reporters and a dozen or so calling from home.

Let's not forget the national and regional media. If your boss is on a committee that's "news" that day, look for an exponential increase. If the Soviets shoot down a commercial airliner over Peoria, it's no holds barred.

Counselor. Yeah, your worst fears made real. We actually advise them on *positions*. Sometimes they even take our advice.

Translator. Want to wade through all 3,000 pages of the tax bill on deadline, or would you like to take a look at the Finance Committee staff's press summary? Do you really want to talk to the legislative assistant, who has a bachelor's in legalese and a master's in obfuscation and who thinks a pithy quote is a citation from the U.S. Code?

Speechwriter. Lots of us write most of them. Don't forget rewrite and staff critiques and then watching him throw it away on the way to the event and write his own talking points. But he'd better have a speech to throw away or you're dead meat.

Media Advocate. Surprise! Every good press secretary spends a heavy fraction of his time defending the media, convincing his boss to submit to an

OOPS...

On a tip, we ran a "Tidbit and Outrages" item in the June issue about a man who was the only 3-time winner of the Texas lottery. There is no Texas lottery.

The Washington Monthly

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interview, explaining that his two-cents' worth wasn't in the lead because somebody else had a nickel idea.

Media Adversary. On the rare occasion when you're on the wrong track or have really screwed something up, we stand ready to discuss the matter in a calm, rational manner. Trust me, you really don't want to talk to the senator right now.

Lightning Rod. Guess who takes the heat when the "Indictment Sought" headline on Page One gets clarified the next day in the little "Oops" box back by the classified. Show me a senator who just got creamed in the local paper and I'll show you a press secretary with a senator in his face screaming, "How could you let your friends in the press do this to me?"

Technician. Been through any of these scenarios? Battery in your tape recorder dead? We'll give you a copy of our tape. Backlighting bad? We're already pulling the drapes. Television format slides? Of course.

Makeup Artist. We want nothing more for our boss than what Tom Brokaw gets, and nothing less. Good flacks are very likely to carry a compact in their jacket pockets. Remember how your mother told you to wear clean underwear in case you were in an accident? Male press secretaries have little night terrors about what the morgue people will think as they collect our personal effects.

Tipster. "I know we're in the middle of a campaign but have you heard why our opponent is really interested in young boys?" Need a gossipy little item for the Sunday column? "Well, I'm not sure it's true, but I heard the other day . . . ."

Source. Even if I were or ever had been, I wouldn't admit it here and you still won't tell, will you, huh? We had an agreement, didn't we?

GARY AUXIER
Washington, D.C.

Lush lawman

Mr. Peters mentioned Grand Forks County, North Dakota sheriff Gordy Taylor ["Tilting at Windmills," June] as in the running for the champion poor example of a law officer due to his three drunk-driving arrests since 1981. You neglected to mention that he was removed from office this past spring by the governor of North Dakota.

Then on June 10, ex-sheriff Taylor placed first in a six-way primary vote for his old office of sheriff.

JAMES ALLAIRE
Alexandria, Minnesota

Hitler's motives

Mr. Peters inquired about the Second World War ["Tilting at Windmills," June] and stated that the "greatest mystery of that war (was) Hitler's decision to declare war against the United States in 1941." My theory is the following:

Adolph Hitler, probably exasperated with the United States for supplying Britain and Russia through the Lend-Lease program in the Atlantic, must have made a secret pact with Tojo that if Japan attacked the U.S. and diverted its attention to the Pacific, he would declare war on the United States in return, thus diverting the U.S. from concentrating entirely on defeating Japan. Germany and Japan were already allies and Japan's imperial aims in the Pacific environ depended on eliminating the U.S., while Hitler intended to conquer the entire earth, which meant the U.S. also. Hitler's plan to conquer the U.S. was eventually discovered and involved Japan invading us on the West Coast, Germany from the east and Argentina—an Italian ally—and others from the south.

JOHN V. HIBBARD
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Divorce court

Your June issue ["Tilting at Windmills"] mentions that only a handful of eligible men are taking advantage of parental leave from companies that offer it—12 out of 9,500 recently surveyed. You urge women to be angry about this. Angry with the men, I gather.

Yet Catalyst, a nonprofit organization focusing on career and family options, suggests a different target for our anger. Catalyst, as reported in *The Washington Post*, states some of the nation's largest companies are beginning to offer leaves for new fathers. "So far, however, very few men are braving conspicuous corporate disapproval to take them. Almost two-thirds of the 384 companies surveyed—about 41 percent of those with paternity leave policies in place—responded that 'no time' was the appropriate amount of time for a man to leave work for the birth of a child."

These companies are merely reflecting an anti-father bias in domestic issues, whose real victims are the children. In divorce, women get overburdened with the sole responsibility of child care, and then we wonder why there is poverty among women and children. The sensible solution is joint custody and mediation, especially as almost all children have two psychological parents, a father and a mother, and need good parental role models of both sexes.

DAVID L. LEVY
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Levy is president of the National Council for Children's Rights

Out of control

I was dismayed to find *The Washington Monthly*, a stronghold of original thinking, retailing tired old arguments over rent control in New York["There's Nothing Liberal about Rent Control," June]. There are, undeniably, flaws in the system, but Blake Fleetwood's and Kurt Eichenwald's highly selective presentation seriously distorts the impact and extent of rent regulations on the city as a whole. To cite a few errors and omissions:

"Manhattan" and "New York City" are not synony-

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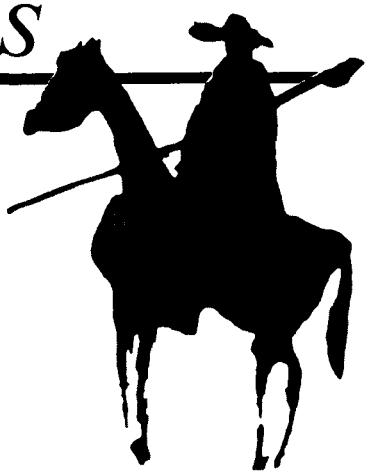
TILTING AT WINDMILLS



In March 1980 we published a special issue with a cover headline proclaiming "The New Idealism." I was convinced that Americans were sick of the selfishness of the seventies and ready for the challenge of a life of commitment. Our banner thus raised, we invited the legions to join us in a mighty movement of moral regeneration. Unfortunately, when we looked behind, everyone was still marching in the opposite direction. But I'm now beginning to be optimistic again.

Last month an editor at *Regardie's*, an excellent local business magazine, called to ask me to do an article proclaiming an end to self-absorption. I could not do the article but was delighted that he was thinking along such lines. Then the "Outlook" section of *The Washington Post* ran an article on its front page titled "The Coming of the 'We' Decade." Written by Paul Taylor, a *Post* reporter, the article's main point was:

"Instead of Me-Decade materialism and muscular patriotism, the new mood seems to be about things like a national sense of community, moral revival, civic virtue, and the imperative of doing good."

A small piece of evidence to support Taylor's thesis was the response to the article about Steven Rattner in our May issue. It was one of the most talked about *Monthly* pieces in years. Its central point was concern over the lost idealism of Rattner, and of the best and the brightest he typifies. The reaction to the article showed a lot of people are thinking the way we are.

And then came the tremendous response to the drought in the Southeast. "Thousands of tons of hay cut by farmers in 39 states are on their way," writes Ward Sinclair in the *Post*. "No one has charged a cent. No one expects a dime from the effort."

Once more I feel stirrings of hope in my soul. Maybe the time is really ripe at last. If you share this feeling and want a program of action to express it, please write us and we'll be glad to send you a copy of "A Neoliberal's Manifesto," which is our most recent attempt to pull together the different strands of the new idealism....

The challenge to the old-time faith healer was to impress the congregation by showing seemingly intimate knowledge of its members and their problems. Sometimes the healer would be briefed in advance, so that he could draw oohs and ahs as he unctously intoned, "Mary Jones, I know how you've been suffering from that pleurisy." On other occasions he would rely on statements that are likely to be true of a high proportion of the adult population, such as, "I know how you've suffered from hemorrhoids" or "There have been times when you've been disappointed in love."

The Reverend Peter Popoff of Upland, California, has brought modern technology to bear on the problem. During the service, his associates have the congregation fill in prayer cards indicating what their problem is. The cards are taken to Mrs. Popoff in a

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back room, where she reads them into a microphone that transmits them to a tiny receiver in the Reverend Popoff's ear....

An unpleasant fact that medicine has not wanted to face is that some physicians do not retain their skills as the years go by, often failing to keep up with the latest research in their fields. This is why Mario Cuomo deserves high praise for advocating periodic reevaluation of physician competence. His proposal, which would require that doctors be examined every six years, makes sense, which, of course, means that it is opposed by the American Medical Association....

The tragedy of William Rehnquist's nomination to be the Chief Justice of the United States is that he was wrong on the great legal issue of his time, which also happened to be the great moral issue of his time, and that he has been wrong throughout his life....

George Will a neoliberal? You may deem that a distinctly unlikely possibility, but I invite your attention to two recent headlines from Will's column: "Listen to Bill Bradley" and "Credit Gary Hart with Ideas."...

Last year I complained about the checks that took six days or more to clear, when my experience as a teenage bank employee was that checks often cleared in one day. In Maryland, where the delay effectively deprives depositors of $170 million a year and gives it to the banks, a legislator introduced a bill to reduce the "float,"(the period in which the check is not cleared) to three days. The bill would have helped hundreds of thousands of customers and harmed only 300 banks, the latter only in the sense that they would be deprived of money that didn't belong to them anyway. The bill was, of course, killed by a House committee....

While the economy has been stagnant this year, salaries and bonuses paid to top executives are up 6.9 percent. On the other hand, those of people at the lower levels, including such key employees as young engineers with less than two years' experience, are going up only 3.7 percent....

Recently *Newsweek* ran an article about Alcott & Andrews, the dress-for-success firm for female yuppies. The story noted that the two women who appear in the TV ads saying, "Hi, I'm Alcott," "And, I'm Andrews," are actually two actresses. The story did not express the least dismay about this fact, finding it not even worthy of comment of any kind. This is an indication of how much we have come to accept advertising that lies and misleads. In this case the deception may be harmless, but it's an outright lie nonetheless...

We have noted the outrageous salaries paid public school administrators, many of whom are of the most marginal competence. Now from the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* comes evidence that they're taking us to the cleaners with their expense accounts as well. It seems the local school superintendent, Jerome Jones, has billed the taxpayers for $62,529 in expense money during the past two years, including $200-a-night hotels, $60 lunches, and $100 dinners. The superintendent says, "I don't know where you can go and buy a meal, a dinner, for under a hundred bucks." If the superintendent needs suggestions on where to go for less pricey dining, he could doubtlessly get them from his teachers....

Remember Richard Neely, the West Virginia Supreme Court justice who required his secretary to perform not only her ordinary duties, but to baby-sit for his child as well? After dutifully serving as a sitter in the Neely home on 11 occasions, she respectfully declined on the twelfth. Neely fired her. You may be interested to know that he has managed to totally escape any kind of punishment, even a slap on the wrist, for his action. The West Virginia Judicial Hearing Board voted 4 to 1 to exonerate him on the basis that on all but one of the occasions that the secretary was asked to baby-sit, Neely was unable to care for the child himself because he was doing work related to his official duties. What I can't understand is why, even if the duties are official, a public employee should be required to do the baby-sitting for the official. When the rest of us go to work, we either arrange

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for a spouse to take care of the child or hire someone to do it. We don't ask our secretary to baby-sit. What if all West Virginia officials used their secretaries as baby-sitters while away from home on official duties—which could literally be every time they go to the office? It's too bad Justice Neely never understood this. He is among the most brilliant young legal thinkers in the country, but self-criticism is definitely not his long suit. It's even worse that the commission could vote 4 to 1 to endorse such an obvious travesty....

Electric utilities were hot on Wall Street this summer as investors were impressed by the difference between declining interest rates and the high, and for the most part secure, dividends offered by the electrics. In fact, except for some nuclear segments of the industry, utilities are enjoying unusual prosperity. Most have a lot of cash on hand.

But, before you call your broker, I suggest you find out what they are doing with that cash. It is being used by at least some of them to buy up other businesses, including savings banks and drug stores. This has not always proved to be a winning strategy in other industries for the simple reason that it's usually better to stick to the business you know. The average utility executive is not likely to bring instant expertise to the sale of Tylenol, Crest, and Tampax.

The Wall Street Journal recently ran an article on this problem by Frederick Rose. This otherwise excellent story did contain one revealing example of the *Journal*'s way of looking at the world. The only other use for the extra cash it mentioned was paying increased dividends to stockholders. Why not reduce the rates paid by consumers?...

Peter Benchley, who served as a speechwriter in the Johnson White House has written a Washington novel called *Q Clearance* that explains a quaint White House practice few outsiders are aware of:

"None of the president's writers worked for the White House. In fact, almost everybody...who worked in the White House didn't work *for* the White House: They all worked for some other agency or department or bureau.

"They had to. Congress authorized a budget for the White House that accommodated 314 employees. The truth was that the great lumbering beast known as the Executive Office of the President employed 1,520 human beings, all of whom had to be paid and insured by somebody. Every President threatened to cut the White House budget. Most Presidents did make cosmetic cuts. But all Presidents quietly restored those cuts by fishing in the federal bureaucracy for slots to fill with their own people, who, thenceforth, never set foot inside the department that paid them, never met their nominal bosses, never performed a single function related to their 'job description.' "

While the exact numbers may vary, this practice has gone on at least since I arrived in Washington in 1961. And I speak as an unindicted former co-conspirator in the process. While I was working at the Peace Corps, one of the secretaries in Bill Moyers's office at the White House was on the payroll of my division....

The great mystery surrounding the mayor of an eastern city is not whether he's on the take, but how he manages to do the taking without leaving the slightest trace of evidence. I've finally learned the secret—or at least the secret according to one reliable source.

The mayor plays poker with builders and developers for whom he has done favors. He wins. The winnings are cash. It's just a friendly game, of course, so no record is kept of the sums involved. The IRS will never know. But it's just possible that the mayor's steady success at the table is not accidental....

In our last issue I wrote about the profound unwisdom of selling the Elk Hills Naval Petroleum Reserve, as the Reagan administration wants to do. Since then, the General Accounting Office has issued a report that confirms the stupidity of the proposed sale. While the administration is planning to ask between $3 to $5 billion for the reserve, the GAO points out that if oil prices ever return to the level of late 1985, the value of Elk Hills would be $9.1 billion.

In another development, John Herrington, who heads

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the Department of Energy, has responded to criticism here and elsewhere that the Elk Hills oil was currently being sold at less than half the going price by announcing that production will be cut by 16 percent.

But, as Rep. Phillip Sharp points out, the continuing sales are still costing the taxpayers more than $300,000 a day...

The case against tobacco and tobacco advertising has received a tremendous boost from a recent report by the Harvard School of Public Health, which concludes that nicotine addiction is akin to heroin dependency. "Accumulated evidence is now overwhelming," says the report, that nicotine is "a powerful, habit-forming drug."

This fact will provide important ammunition for lawyers who are bringing suits against those who sell and advertise cigarettes. In the past, jurors have often been persuaded that smoking is a voluntary act and therefore, any harm it causes is the fault of the victim. Now it can be made clear to them that the smoker may have had free choice when he started, but that he soon became part of an addict population, many of whom simply can't quit no matter how much they want to.

With this fact established, liability for everyone who participates in the preparation or publication of the ads that make smoking glamorous, the ads that persuade young people to try their first cigarette, everyone who participates in this vile process can be held liable—tobacco companies, their advertising agencies, and the newspapers and magazines that publish the ads. A few large damage awards might induce a rebirth of the morality among these various parties. Even the prospect of them might bring an end to those ads. There's nothing more bracing than a cold bath of red ink....

"Nuclear Hijacking: Now Within the Grasp of Any Bright Lunatic" was the title of an article we published in January 1973. Today, the situation is not better, it's worse. "The probability of nuclear terrorism is increasing" says a recent report by the International Task Force on the Prevention of Terrorism, a group that includes Admiral Stansfield Turner, the former CIA director, and Admiral Thomas Davis, a former assistant director of the Arms Control Disarmament Agency. The presence of the admirals adds authority to the report's finding that the U.S. Navy's tactical weapons "are vulnerable to use by terrorists" because they lack safety locking devices that could prevent those who steal bombs from being able to explode them. The devices are also missing in a large number of short-range nuclear weapons stored on land within the United States and Europe....

Speaking of terrorists, did you know that security guards at Dulles Airport failed to recognize hand guns in 25 percent of the bags used in a series of spot checks carried out by the

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airlines? I imagine an even worse result would be obtained at many other airports. Too many of the security guards I've encountered look like they were hired at a convention for retired deputy sheriffs. The belly hanging over the belt, the eyes that have slept on duty for too many hours over too many years to have any hope of ever being alert again. And, of course, the checked baggage is usually not inspected at all. I used to assume it was x-rayed somewhere in the bowels of the airport, but I've since learned that assumption is wrong....

The craziest thing about the administration's preoccupation with Nicaragua is that it diverts attention from Mexico, which is our most important Latin American neighbor. Not only does Mexico have the capacity to create financial chaos here by defaulting on its debt, but it also threatens to flood our borders with immigrants far beyond our capacity to absorb, and also beyond our capacity to keep out.

I strongly support a liberal immigration policy in which we err on the side of generosity to let in many of those who want to come to this country. But frankly I was stunned by a recent study prepared by Barbara Torrey at the Center for International Research at the Census Bureau. She found that the projected labor force in Mexico will grow at a rate three times that of workers in the United States during the next 15 years. Yet the Mexican GNP is only 5 percent of ours. How is such an economy going to absorb that exploding workforce? The answer is, of course, that it can't. Unless we act decisively to help stimulate the Mexican economy now and in the next few years, our borders and our economy are going to be overwhelmed....

Did American Express try to bribe me not to tell this story? Let me tell you what happened and you can decide for yourself.

It all began more than three years ago, in May 1983. My wife and I wanted to go to Europe in June, but we were a bit short of money. In such cases packaged tours are tempting because they are often cheaper than a trip you can quickly put together on your own. The trouble with most packaged tours, of course, is that you are subjected to the company of a group and guide that you may not find compatible for one day, much less two or three weeks. So, when in exploring the possibilities, we found an American Express brochure that listed both "escorted" and "on your own" tours, we were delighted and signed up for an "on your own" trip to Italy. We wouldn't be part of a group, but American Express would arrange for the hotel and transportation. The tour required a $200 deposit, which we signed for, using our American Express credit card.

It turned out we had to cancel the tour. We did so 32 days before we were to leave. The brochure provided that in order to get your deposit refunded you had to cancel 45 days in advance if the tour was "escorted," otherwise within 30 days. We felt the "on your own" was clearly otherwise. But, a charge for $200 showed up on our July bill. It was not shown as a debt for the American Express tour but as a debt to Pan Am.

We began calling and writing, saying we did not owe Pan Am anything, that we thought they were talking about the $200 tour deposit, which we explained we did not think we owed. We received no response. And in a few months our card was cancelled even though we had never had a problem in the 20 years we had held it. Upon receiving notice of the cancellation, we immediately called and protested, explaining once again what had happened. The young woman we talked to said "Obviously something has gone wrong, I'll try to take care of it." In a few weeks we got the usual monthly statement from American Express with a notice at the top, "Your card has been reinstated. Do not pay disputed amount until dispute resolved."

Several months went by and the card was cancelled again. We called again, and again it was reinstated.

Between 1983 and 1985, we went through this cycle three times, making innumerable phone calls and writing innumerable letters, trying to straighten things out.

We never got an answer to our letters. All we got were letters about the $200 we owed Pan Am. The only acknowledgement of our trouble came from

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occasionally sympathetic phone operators, who seemed to have the power to push a button temporarily reinstating us but not to look into our problem any further.

The final cancellation in March 1985 was accompanied first by a threatening letter from an American Express attorney and then by a threatening call from a collection agency. When the collection agency called I said, "What drives us crazy is that no one has ever answered our complaint —no one has ever explained how we could possibly owe Pan Am anything. Please read our letters before you threaten us."

His reply: "I don't have time."

At this point, I went to a lawyer. He wrote American Express. They again refused to give any explanation. We decided to sue. That got a response. Soon we were in negotiation. And by early June of this year a settlement had been reached between my lawyers and those representing American Express. My wife and I would receive $3,500 to compensate for our time and aggravation, and American Express would give us a letter demonstrating that it had investigated our case and corrected the flaws in its system that had led to our unhappy experience. But a couple of weeks later, my lawyer called and said, "We have a problem. American Express not only doesn't want you to reveal the amount of money you're getting" (a condition I had agreed to), "they don't want you to write about the case at all."

I said, "I can't agree to that. After all, I'm a journalist and it's quite likely that I will write about it."

Several days later, our lawyer called back. "They won't budge. They want to gag you completely. But if you'll accept the gag, they're willing to double the money." I replied that I didn't see how I could accept the gag. "I'll think it over and call you back tomorrow."

That night I had sweet dreams of what we could do with that $7,000. If I could have figured out any conscientious way to do so, you can bet I would have grabbed the money and run. Unfortunately, the increased money was clearly a bribe—or so it seemed to me—since it was conditioned solely on my not writing about the case. I now felt I had to write about it.

Indeed the more I considered the matter, the more writing about it seemed the best approach to the problem. A law suit can take years and monopolize your time and energy in a way that is highly detrimental to everything else in your life. So I dropped the suit and began scribbling notes for this column.

What I had hoped to accomplish with the suit was to establish the principle that in this computerized age people cannot just be ignored as my wife and I were. Their problems should be heard and responded to. It is maddening never to get a straight answer. A customer should be entitled to a reasonable response to a reasonable complaint within a reasonable time.

This principle is not firmly embedded in the law today. But it only needs a few imaginative lawyers and a few responsive judges and juries to establish it as part of the common law. I don't think it will be hard to find such judges and juries—or even enough congressmen to turn the principle into legislation—because the most impressive aspect of our experience with American Express has been that whenever we recount it someone will say, "The same kind of thing happened to me" last week or last month or last year. They were dealt with automatically and nothing they said or did could reach the computer. I don't think they and all the others like them are going to take it much longer. . . .

For those of you who prize irony, I have this juicy morsel. Guess where I met Marci McDonald, the author of the article on the Gotliebs in this issue? She was placed next to me at a dinner at the Canadian embassy last winter—seating chart by Sondra Gotlieb, of course. . . .

And for the truly bizarre among you who share my morbid fascination with the Harris-Tarnower murder, I have another irony. If, before the fatal incident in the second-floor bedroom, Jean had written a book that had attracted the glowing reviews that her *Stranger in Two Worlds* has recently received, she would have become a celebrity in the New York literary world, he would have married her immediately, and they would have lived happily ever after.

—*Charles Peters*

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WHO'S WHO in the Administration

As a member of the 60's folk group "The Highwaymen," **Stephen S. Trott** made the charts with that memorable song "Michael Row the Boat Ashore." Now the president has nominated him to be associate attorney general, the number three job at the Justice Department.....

Fame has so far eluded **Charles Kupperman**, who has held administrative posts at NASA and OPM. But you can bet he'll soon enjoy the obsequious attention of every member of the White House staff. As the new deputy director for administration, Kupperman is Master of the Perks, the guy in charge of doling out such status-makers as in-office TVs and access to limousines and helicopters....

White House officials have blamed the president's national security affairs advisor, vice admiral **John M. Poindexter** for a series of botched efforts. They claim his poor briefing of the president led to Reagan's confusing statements at a June press conference on SALT II, and that his failure to broker differences between NASA and DOD has kept the administration from deciding whether to build another space shuttle. Poindexter is one reason why the current NSC staff is generally considered the worst in history....

For all his problems, **Michael Deaver** still has one loyalist left on the White House staff, assistant to the president **William Henkel**....

Assistant to the president for legislative affairs **William Ball** is credited within the White House for getting 20 congressman to switch their votes in favor of aid to the contras....

The Senate has finally confirmed **Terrence M. Scanlon** as chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Scanlon claims this exonerates him from the "sensational and baseless charges" that led to a year and a half investigation. But not even Scanlon now denies, as he did under oath last year, that he used commission staff to do paperwork for his personal affairs, and an anti-abortion group. The Justice Department based its decision not to prosecute on the impossibility of proving that Scanlon's earlier denial was not, as he claims, a memory lapse....

Walter C. Lenahan and **C. McClain Haddow** are sharing unwelcome limelight as subjects of seperate government investigations. Lenehan, before retiring in February from the Commerce Department, discussed job opportunities with three companies affected by the textile quota program he ran. Haddow, before he resigned in February as HHS chief of staff, set up a private foundation to raise funds for an HHS-sponsored public information campaign, through which he routed an undisclosed $30,000 to his wife, a foundation fundraising "subcontractor."...

In

WHITE HOUSE

Acting Principal Deputy to the National Security Advisor—**Alton G. Keel Jr.** has been executive director of the Rogers Commission.

Deputy Presedential Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs—**J. Daniel Howard** has been press spokesman for East Asian and Pacific Affairs at the State Department.

Associate Counsel to the President—**C. Dean McGrath Jr.** has been attorney-advisor and general counsel for the Treasury Department.

Associate Counsel to the President—**J. Michael Shepard** has been deputy assistant attorney general in the Office of Legal Policy at the Justice Department.

Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of the Political Affairs Office—**Haley Barbour** has been a special assistant to the president in this office.

STATE

Ambassador to Lebanon—**John H. Kelly**.

Ambassador to Spain—**Reginald Bartholomew**.

Ambassador to Nigeria—**Princeton N. Lyman**.

Ambassador to Czechoslovakia—**Julian M. Niemczyk**.

Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates—**David Lyle Mack**.

AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS

Member, National Labor Relations Board—**Mary Cracraft** has been a labor lawyer with the Kansas City firm of Gage & Tucker.

Director, Competition Bureau, Federal Trade Commission—**Jeffrey I. Zuckerman** has been chief of staff at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Director, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission—**William C. MacLeod** has been the director of the FTC's Regional Protection bureau in Chicago.

Director, Bureau of Economics, Federal Trade Commission—**David T. Scheffman** has been acting director.

Member, Nuclear Regulatory Commission—**Kenneth M. Carr** is a retired Navy admiral.

Out

WHITE HOUSE

Deputy Presidential Press Secretary—**Edward Djerejian**.

STATE

Ambassador to Nicaragua—**Thomas W. M. Smith**.

Ambassador to Czechoslovakia—**William H. Luers**.

Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates—**George Quincy Lumsden Jr.**

AGRICULTURE

Undersecretary for Small Community and Rural Development—**Frank W. Naylor Jr.**

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An eyewitness account of local TV news

by John Eisendrath

Robin Robinson is a beautiful, articulate woman who, until about a year ago, had one small defect: her upper lip quivered slightly when she talked. For most people that wouldn't pose a problem, but Robinson is a reporter and anchor for WBBM-TV, the CBS-owned station in Chicago; for her a quivering lip was as troublesome as having no lips at all. Something had to be done. It was. The station sent Robinson to a television consultant, and faster than you can say quivering lips sink ratings, she was cured.

This is local TV news, that wonderful business where weathermen have names like Storm, viewers are warned of killer salad bars, and two-thirds of Americans learn about the events of the day. Intellectuals and policymakers may get hot and bothered about what's in *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*, but most Americans never read either paper. And for all their fame, Tom Brokaw, Dan Rather, and Peter Jennings influence public opinion less than local anchormen like New York's Chuck Scarborough and Chicago's Floyd Kalber. Twenty-five years ago local TV news consisted of an anchorman reading for 15 minutes. In most major cities today, it is a two-hour variety show with big stars pulling in big money.

In fact, local news has come so far that it threatens to eclipse the networks: a number of analysts predict that nightly network broadcasts will be eliminated within five years. Even now, available technology allows local stations to cover national and international stories as thoroughly as networks. Recent defections by network stars underscore the new attractions of local news. In January, Sylvia Chase quit ABC News, where she was a correspondent for the newsmagazine "20/20," to become weeknight anchor at KRON-TV in San Francisco. In June 1985, Bill Kurtis left his co-anchor spot on "CBS Morning News," to co-anchor the news at WBBM.

While it is clear that in big cities the days of Happy Talk are over, the rising influence of local TV news is troubling. As supplemental information, TV news is terrific, providing a catalog of the day's events. But most local newscasts rarely penetrate beyond the superficial, and even the best stations produce a kind of electronic Front Page, complete with blaring headlines, extras, and shameless "scoops."

I should know. For most of the past year I

John Eisendrath is an editor of The Washington Monthly.

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worked as a producer at WBBM, which is known as one of the finest local news organizations in the country, having made a name for itself in the 1970s by breaking the Happy Talk mold. "It may not be pretty," went old ads for the station, "but it's real."

Almost everyone who isn't on the air in television is called a producer. At WBBM, there are show producers, who decide if the city council story should go before or after the weather report; special assignment producers, who dream up reports about mail-order brides, singles' bars, and UFOs; and producers assigned to prop up reporters by doing everything from thinking up stories and reporting them, to making sure the reporters' Adolfo dresses are pressed and their hair curlers are plugged in.

I produced the nightly tirades co-anchor Walter Jacobson delivers in the form of commentary. Jacobson is a cross between Howard Cosell and Sean Penn, an iconoclastic bad boy who, every weeknight, is given two minutes of air time during the ten o'clock news to wax apoplectic. Jacobson's bitching has made him an institution in Chicago, the conscience of the common man hard on the trail of waste, fraud, and abuse. I was hired to perpetuate that reputation, and I did so with gusto. No loafing city worker was safe, no pothole unexplained. From the Department of Sewers to the space shuttle—if there was mud, I'd find it and Jacobson would sling it. It was powerful and petty, exhilarating and embarrassing. Without exception it was, as they say in the business, great television.

Lunching in the Twilight Zone

When I worked at WBBM, the search for great television began at 8:30 every morning. That's when the WBBM news director, his assistant, and a number of the producers met to decide what stories would be covered. The agenda they followed was in large part set by what was in that morning's *Chicago Tribune*, and *Chicago Sun-Times*. Stories not drawn from the papers came from the head of the two-person planning office who also attended the meeting. By the time the reporters got in, the stories were set. Many times reporters were instructed who they would interview and when.

This was one of the first lessons I learned about local TV: there are no sources. Local newscasts are primarily reactive. All daily news organizations, print and broadcast, devote a large portion of their product to recording the events of the day. But newspapers, whose reporters understand the beats they cover far better than their local television counterparts, almost all of whom are on general assignment, provide the kind of depth and break the kind of investigative ground that viewers rarely see on the evening news. A morning meeting rarely passed without the news director assigning a reporter to follow up a story in one of the two local papers.

This was the second lesson: newspapers can't scoop TV; the two aren't in competition with each other. It's less a question of journalistic competence than a matter of money; the *Sun-Times* can out-report WBBM every day and it won't change the newscast's advertising revenues, which are based on a comparison of WBBM's ratings with those of other TV stations. As a result, a TV reporter's best source is often the newspaper. This system works as long as the print reporters don't miss any big stories. When they do, however, the viewers can be left badly uninformed. Until Mark Fairchild and Janice Hart emerged victorious in the Democratic primary last March, for instance, no TV newscast had ever mentioned the fact that these followers of Lyndon LaRouche were running for lieutenant governor and secretary of state, respectively. For months newscasters reported that the Democratic candidates for those offices were running unopposed. TV never reported on the LaRouche candidates because the newspapers never did; how the papers missed the story is another matter. And though at WBBM we devoted lots of time and energy to covering every petty charge and countercharge of the other candidates—"You're a cocaine dealer," "You owe three years worth of alimony payments,"—we mentioned Fairchild and Hart only once. That was around midnight on election night, after the results were in. We reported, however, that they were libertarians.

It's not that TV reporters aren't able to dig up stories of their own. Far from it: most of the TV reporters I know are bright, hardworking journalists. It's just that in television, enterprise is a matter of style as much as substance. Almost no story, for instance, regardless of how moving the pictures or the interviews, is considered complete unless the reporter introduces it live from the field. There is rarely a functional reason for this. Many a reporter in Chicago has had to introduce a story about a convention from inside a darkened and empty room in which—hours earlier—the convention was held. One reporter once had to introduce a story on speeding city buses standing curbside on a street where buses, with few stops in that stretch, are known to speed. The report aired at rush hour, when the street is usual-

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ly filled with buses. But when the reporter, with his back to traffic, said that the buses in the story were like the ones "going by now," there was one problem: there wasn't a bus in sight.

Another obstacle to enterprise is technology. Television is cumbersome. Television reporters need a lot more than a notepad and a pencil. At stations in large cities they need a cameraman, a sound man, an editor, and a producer. They need editing machines and, to go live, vans filled with transmitting equipment. The only piece of equipment you won't find in the WBBM newsroom is a word processor, which should give you some idea of the value TV places on the written word.

It takes five people using tons of equipment an entire day to produce 90 seconds of television news. Reporters are often just a cog in this collaborative process, which is why they are sometimes referred to as "microphone stands." Even when a reporter is coordinating the story, it takes all of his time just to shoot the video, edit, and lay the sound track for a piece that gives only the bare facts. This cuts down on more than enterprise. It cuts down on analysis as well. There is rarely time for reporters to reflect and make their own judgments. When they do, their judgments can be memorable.

Last March, WBBM's political editor, Mike Flannery, reported that a candidate for alderman had a convicted felon on his payroll. The next day the candidate, Manuel Torres, said that a bomb had been planted outside his campaign office. Rather than do the standard dirty tricks story, Flannery decided to put the incident in perspective. While every other TV reporter played it straight, Flannery saw the planting of the bomb for what it probably was: a thinly veiled attempt to gain sympathy for Torres in light of the previous night's story.

TV reporters have so much to be concerned with that they spend a good part of their day worrying about everything but the story. They are, for instance, forever trying to appease their crew. Standing on a street corner in the middle of a Chicago blizzard in order to report what everyone already knows—that it's snowing—is unpleasant enough for the reporter, but at least he gets lots of money and notoriety for his suffering. The crew gets nothing. The only glamorous spot in television is in front of the camera. On the other side it's just another job: fires, murders, press conferences, elections. Running after crooked politicians with a 20-pound camera on your shoulder gets tiring after a while.

That's where lunch comes in. If reporters don't want crews to make them look and sound like they're from the Twilight Zone they had better allow for a long lunch. And because crews get paid extra for not taking a lunch break, the reporter has to perform one additional task to keep his face in focus: he has to lie to the dispatcher who monitors their whereabouts. At least once a day reporters call in to say that an "unexpected" traffic jam has delayed them more than an hour. Though this form of hide and seek may seem childish, it's not. It's television.

Lights! Cameras! Hatchet Jobs!

While the reporters placate their crews, the producers spend the morning in the newsroom reading wire copy, monitoring the stories the network reporters are covering and pacing. There is nothing worse for them than a slow news day. Give them a disaster, a reason to go live, a way to flaunt television's power, and they will spring into action, producing, at times, not only great television but great journalism as well. When we went on the air at 5 p.m. on the day the space shuttle exploded, we delivered the tragic news, replayed the awesome video, and ran interviews with scientists, former astronauts, and politicians, all explaining how the explosion could have occurred and what the impact on the space program would be. It wasn't just the video of Christa McAuliffe's parents watching their daughter die a horrible death that was so powerful; television that night—local as well as national—offered more than pictures: it provided quick, insightful answers to vexing questions.

And despite Ronald Reagan's success, television is not easy to manipulate. When Cathy Crowell Webb changed her mind in April 1985 and insisted that Gary Dotson had not raped her, the Illinois Prisoner Review Board held hearings to decide whether to commute Dotson's five-year prison sentence. While the nation got to witness Phyllis George ask Dotson and Webb to kiss and make up on the "CBS Morning News," the local Chicago stations covering the hearings left viewers with a more powerful, if equally tacky, image. Governor James Thompson, sensing a publicity coup, decided to personally conduct the hearings. A former U.S. attorney, Thompson spent hours cross-examining Webb, throwing himself into the center of the controversy in an attempt to enhance his popularity. But because television captures images better than arguments, Thompson's stunt backfired. The memory of most Chicagoans is not of Thompson comparing the two versions of Webb's story, but of the

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governor of the state of Illinois, a man with presidential aspirations, standing, pointer in hand, beneath a wall-size enlargement of a picture of Webb's semen-stained panties.

When done deftly, these moments have the kind of spontaneity that make for memorable television. Even in reporting non-substantive stories that do not fall within the conventional scope of news, an act or gesture can exquisitely reveal character. One day in the newsroom, for instance, Walter Jacobson interviewed Clarence McClain, a former aide to Chicago Mayor Harold Washington who was dismissed after it was discovered he had a vice record that included convictions for a number of stints as a pimp. McClain complained that he had been out of work since the record of his pimping became public. When McClain said he was out of money, Jacobson immediately asked if the overcoat he was wearing was a Burberry. When he said no, Jacobson, a thin white man who stands no taller than five feet six inches, reached around McClain, a burly black man well over six feet, turned over his collar, and looked for a label. During the 30-minute interview, McClain talked about a number of alleged payoffs and scandals brewing in city hall, but when it was edited for the evening news to one minute and thirty seconds—almost every story on TV lasts one minute and thirty seconds—most of the time was devoted to the label bit. After the interview one producer went up to Jacobson to congratulate him. "That was great television," he said. But it wasn't a Burberry.

My job was special. I worked on one of only two investigative teams at the station. No one told me what stories to report on, and I wasn't burdened with the complexities of television. We could use stock photos or, if none fit the story, I could send a still photographer to get the pictures we needed. No camera crew, no van filled with equipment. I was free to go after any story, local, national, or international. Better still, my reports were delivered by Jacobson in the form of commentary. Free from the technical constraints of TV, we were also free to interpret conflicting accounts and deliver what we viewed as the subjective truth.

That's why I ended up at the monthly meeting of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) last November. The CHA, which is in charge of the city's public housing, is a troubled agency, known for lavishing perks on its executives while doing little to improve the living conditions of Chicago's poor. I figured that a thorough investigation of the CHA would provide a wealth of stories—about non-competitive contracts, maintenance problems, maybe even unsafe housing conditions. Thoughtful journalist's cap firmly in place, I set off for the morning meeting.

Driving by the building where the meeting was to be held, I noticed two city workers taking time out from pouring concrete for a sidewalk to reserve parking spaces for the CHA board members. As the board members arrived, the Department of Streets and Sanitation employees spent 20 minutes removing garbage cans they had placed in the road earlier to fend off other cars. Thoughtfulness forgotten, I raced to a phone booth to call a photographer. Lights! Cameras! This was television.

I sat through most of the meeting, but understood little. There were reports about finances and maintenance problems as well as approval of minutes from the previous meeting. This is where exhilaration and embarrassment meet: I had no idea if the CHA board was doing its job on important issues like safety and sanitation, but in eight hours, as a result of my reporting, the board was going to be vilified before millions of Chicagoans. I can only hope that a wave of shame washes over every journalist who finds himself in this position. When the board members left the meeting, reporters from the *Sun-Times* and the *Tribune* interviewed them about an internal power struggle that flared up during the meeting and about a recent increase in public housing maintenance problems. I was too embarrassed to join in. As my photographer snapped pictures of the city workers directing traffic for the departing board members, I hid behind a tree, hoping no one could see me. When I returned to the newsroom and told Jacobson about the loafing city workers, he was overjoyed. "It's a quintessential Walter story," he said. It was also the only story I ever did on the CHA.

Knowing that we occupied the serious corner of the newsroom, people would tip us off to only the most significant stories. Some tips were so hot they insisted we pay for them. Remember Vanessa Williams, the former Miss America who lost her crown when it was discovered she had posed in the nude? Well, this tipster said, for $4,000 he'd let us run a story about the new Miss America, Susan Akin, that made Williams seem like Doris Day. It seems that the former Miss Mississippi's father and grandfather were indicted and later acquitted in the Ku Klux Klan-related murder of three civil rights workers during the 1960s. For $10,000, he also claimed he could provide us with confidential medical reports that

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showed that Burt Reynolds was dying of AIDS. Here is the difference between network and local television news. In May, the brass at "NBC Nightly News" debated whether to air an interview with known terrorist Abu Abbas while keeping his whereabouts a secret. At WBBM, our ethical questions revolved around whether we should buy stories alleging Burt Reynolds has AIDS. We had bought stories from this guy before, but a temporary budget squeeze—not a fit of moral outrage—prevented us from paying for these. Sure enough, we were scooped. Within a week both stories ran in the *National Enquirer*.

Swept away

The special projects producers work on important stories for the November, February, and May "sweeps." The ratings of television news programs taken during those months will be used to set what a station may charge advertisers. During these months stations around the country pull out all the stops to give viewers unfiltered versions of what they've been getting every day: sex, violence, and celebrities. Last May, KABC, the ABC-owned station in Los Angeles, promoted a series on abuse of the elderly by running ads in the *Los Angeles Times* with a picture of a battered woman captioned, "Is that any way to treat your mother?" At the same time the NBC station in Los Angeles, KNBC-TV, ran a week-long series about the dangers of music videos. The series touched on a number of ticklish questions: Do music videos corrupt American youth? Do they lead to drugs and alcohol? Do they provide higher ratings?

A few years ago WABC-TV in New York ran a series titled "Killer Salad Bars." For last May's sweeps, the station produced "The Great Gameshow Comeback," which offered viewers a "look behind the scenes at how you can get on a game show, the secret to winning, and why they've become the hottest shows on TV." Several years ago, the ABC station in Chicago, WLS-TV, did a series that asked the question that strikes fear in the heart of every Chicagoan: "Are there sharks in Lake Michigan?"

Then there were the stories aired last November on WNBC-TV in New York. As you'll recall, 1985 was a banner year for disasters. A volcano erupted in Colombia, famine struck Ethiopia, there were more civil air crashes than any other year, hurricanes and mudslides, and the AIDS epidemic swept the country. WNBC edited together the horrifying footage taken of these disasters, replayed it in slow motion, and aired it in a three-part series, "Is God Punishing Us?"

Although God declined to make His television debut on Chuck Scarborough's evening broadcast, the intrepid anchor did get the next best thing: Harry Belafonte theologizing, and members of the clergy speculating that the natural disasters were the "devil's work" and that the AIDS outbreak is God's way of punishing homosexuals.

In Chicago, the newscasts during sweeps months are filled with thinly-veiled plugs for entertainment shows that appear on the same network. Back in March 1980, when the nation was wondering who shot JR, WBBM—owned by the same network (CBS) that airs "Dallas" — dispatched co-anchor Bill Kurtis to Malibu to profile Larry Hagman. Last November, when "Dynasty II: The Colbys" premiered on ABC, WLS media critic Gary Deeb aired a "behind the scenes" look at America's newest soap opera. When talk show host Oprah Winfrey, whose show is taped at WLS, was nominated for an Oscar for her performance in "The Color Purple," WLS—for which she is an important source of ratings and revenue—spent five minutes on two 10 p.m. newscasts soberly detailing the "Oprah Phenomenon." That's like *The New York Times* devoting 15 pages of any weekday edition to a story about one of its reporters who has been nominated for a Pulitzer prize.

Part of the reason for all this titillation and hype is competition. At WBBM, a large portion of the station's estimated $75-million-a-year gross advertising revenues comes from news programming. Each ratings point is worth about $600,000—at local stations in New York it's $1 million. More than $400 million worth of commercials air during local newscasts each year in Chicago. With so much money at stake, it's not surprising that local TV is the heir to Chicago's Front Page tradition. As newspapers have folded—20 years ago there were five papers in Chicago; today there are two—television has picked up where Hildy Johnson left off. This is particularly clear during sweeps months, when stations shamelessly try to find out what each other's sweeps series will be. When word leaked to WLS last November that WBBM was planning a sweeps series on Black Catholics, the rival station immediately dispatched a reporter to do the same story. No matter that Chicago is full of pressing problems that reporters could thoughtfully assess; if WBBM was doing a series on Black Catholics, WLS would do one, too.

For the viewer, sweeps must be as depressing as they are titillating. Last May, WABC-TV in

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New York opened one broadcast with a report about a movie producer busted for sodomy, and followed up with a report on a child rape case. Before breaking for a commercial, "Girls in Gangs," an "exclusive WABC" investigation was promoted. On the sound track a sobbing mother wondered, "Not my daughter?"

Of course, not all the exploitive stories run during sweeps months. Last December, WLS aired nude photographs of "Miami Vice" star Don Johnson and his ex-wife, actress Melanie Griffith, on its 4 p.m. newscast. In a report on the publication of the nine-year-old photos in *Playboy* magazine, WLS showed the couple in a variety of sexually suggestive poses, backed by the theme music from Johnson's hip cop show. The next day WLS news director Jim Hattendorf told *Sun-Times* reporter Robert Feder the station "went too far" in airing the pictures. "Several of them," he said sheepishly, "showed too much."

The goddess

Around mid-afternoon WBBM's tours begin. Almost every day school children or community groups visit the newsroom, looking as if they are touring Paramount studios. After all, local television reporters are celebrities. A *Chicago Sun-Times* poll in February found that besides the mayor and four members of the Super Bowl Champion Chicago Bears, Oprah Winfrey, Walter Jacobson, and Bill Kurtis were the most recognizable people in town. When Jacobson was on trial last December, accused of libeling Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp., it was a media event of von Bulowesque proportions in Chicago. Jacobson had been accused of libeling the tobacco company in a 1981 commentary that claimed Brown & Williamson was trying to lure youngsters to Viceroy cigarettes with ads equating smoking with "pot, wine, beer, sex, and wearing a bra." The papers covered the trial's every ebb and flow, and when the jury found Jacobson guilty, the headlines blared: "Down and Out," "Jacobson Rips Bully Lawyer," and " 'He Didn't Tell the Whole Truth': Jury Foreman Explains Jacobson Verdict."

To some, local reporters are more than mere celebrities. In an article in *Chicago* magazine last October, Richard Stern wrote that a chance run-in with a television reporter on the street would be like "running into Zeus." Stern lavished most of his praise on Deborah Norville, an afternoon anchor at NBC's local station, WMAQ. Showing a discerning eye, he compared her to Buddha and Jesus. After dismissing his wife as "my own dear companion. . . [who is] full of doubt about herself and her appearance," Stern described his dream come true: a lunch date with Norville. In imitation Bob Guccione prose, Stern wrote that the "erotic parts of me wanted to take this woman in hand." *Chicago*'s headline writers were equally measured, titling the story, "Lunch With A Goddess."

Lest you think Norville a cigar-chomping street reporter victimized by the fetish created by one man's mid-life crisis, consider the picture that accompanies the article. There is Norville from the shoulders up, seemingly naked. Shoulders bare, blond hair blowing back, luscious lips parted just so, the image Norville projects is less of Athena than a seductively air-brushed Miss April.

Local anchors are certainly paid like celebrities. The annual salaries for WBBM's three co-anchors reportedly are $450,000, $900,000 and $1.2 million. If that's not enough to make even George Steinbrenner blanch, the sportscaster makes about $1 million a year—roughly the same as Mike Wallace. Management justifies these salaries on the basis of studies showing the beneficial effect each anchor has on ratings and, therefore, revenue. Nevertheless, in terms of the product, celebrity anchors have a deleterious effect on the news.

In part, the problem is one of resources: for every anchorman like Bill Kurtis, WBBM could hire 20 reporters, editors, cameramen, and producers, each one at $60,000 a year. Kurtis happens to be an incredibly hard-working journalist, constantly in the field reporting stories and working on documentaries, but he's the exception. There is a clause in co-anchor Don Craig's contract, for instance, that protects him from having to do any reporting—all he has to do for his $450,000 a year is read.

That Craig wangled such a cushy deal is fine with me. I wish I had such a deal. The biggest problem is that it is difficult to manage celebrities. During the past year, WBBM has had three news directors, and each one found his authority usurped in varying degrees by the powerful anchors. The result has been a series of editorial and stylistic fits and starts, as each news director has tried to impose a new order on the broadcast. For a while the station covered politics in depth, then suddenly the focus was on the suburbs. Under one news director, reporters walked and talked when they appeared on camera; under another, they stood still. This can be very confusing to the viewer, frustrating to the reporters, and harmful to the broadcast—particularly since, as the editorial focus shifts, the

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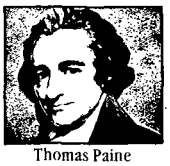
Jefferson

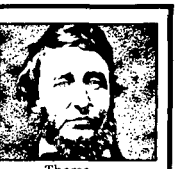

Thomas Paine

Adam Smith

John Stuart Mill

Machiavelli

Marx


Thoreau

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reporters have little time to become experts in any one field. It can be demoralizing as well. In front of a number of people in the newsroom last February, Jacobson bet then-news director Jay Newman that he would be fired before sweeps began in May. He gave Newman two-to-one odds. Never take a bet like that even with odds of 100-to-1: Newman was gone by mid-April.

On the newsroom tours, the corner where Jacobson sits is the most popular stop. Led by one of WBBM's two avuncular weathermen, the groups stop a few feet from Jacobson's desk, hoping to see Chicago's most celebrated newsman do a little muckraking. One particularly hushed group watched Jacobson talk excitedly into the phone for about 15 minutes. Alternately scribbling on a notepad and typing, he could have been squeezing a high administration source for a story. In fact, Jacobson, who admits that his sources are either retired or dead, was talking with the French consul in Chicago, trying to wangle a special visa for his baby-sitter so she could travel with his family on their upcoming trip to the Caribbean.

I was no better. I sat a few feet from Jacobson, and people touring the newsroom would often point in my direction and say, "He works for Walter." (I always thought that familiarity summed up the power of television. Mike Royko, a syndicated columnist for the *Chicago Tribune*, and Jacobson are the two best-known journalists in Chicago; yet the columnist is known to all as Royko, and the TV anchorman is known simply as Walter.) As the tour looked on, I vigorously worked the phone—one day asking Miss America's mother about her daughter's sordid past ("Congratulations on your daughter's victory, Mrs. Akin. By the way, is your husband a member of the Ku Klux Klan?"), another day ferreting out Burt's horrible secret. One time, with visitors standing a few feet away, I worked on a story about the governor flying to Chicago at state expense so he could be with his daughter for Halloween. As they watched, wide-eyed, I made calls to the governor's neighbors to find out what costume the governor's eight-year-old daughter wore (she went as a witch) and whether the governor tagged along. Understandably, tour groups always left our corner content that Walter and his team were keeping the streets safe and the politicians in line.

Terror in the 26th Ward

Showtime. The make-up is on, the lights are hot and the script is in the TelePrompTer. When everything clicks, the news is at once high-tech and homespun, as stories from around the world are read to us by faces we recognize as friendly and caring. Throw a wrench in the works, however, and the bloopers come fast and furious. One day last May on the five o'clock show at WABC in New York, the illustrations accompanying the story took on a life of their own. As one of the show's co-anchors read a story about Chernobyl, a graphic for a story on gas prices appeared. Anatoly Shcharansky showed up during a story on Pope John Paul II. The Chernobyl graphic popped up during a story about Malcolm Forbes's yacht.

Since the news is delivered live, there are no takes, no second chances. Newspaper reporters often have to file stories under tough deadline pressure, but there is no deadline like a live deadline. Nothing gets the adrenaline pumping as maddeningly, and nothing, absolutely nothing, so overwhelms you. Leading up to and during each telecast we are all newsroom vigilantes.

This is especially true around elections, when television's accoutrements make covering campaigns a logistical nightmare. On the eve of a hotly contested city council race last March, for instance, we planned to have the two candidates involved appear live at the beginning of the five o'clock show. So our vans filled with transmitting equipment were set up at the locations where each candidate was scheduled to be when the show began. Nearing airtime, one candidate, Luis Gutierrez, was nowhere near the appointed spot, so, since the vans couldn't pack up and move in time, and since the reporter on the scene didn't have a car, I was dispatched to track Gutierrez down.

By the time I found him it was 15 minutes before airtime. He was campaigning door to door with the mayor—a big coup for him, since the mayor drew well in this ward. But, with about ten minutes to go, the big problem wasn't prying Gutierrez loose from the mayor, it was getting him away from a reporter from another television station. His campaign manager told me Gutierrez was running late; I'd have to wait until 5:15. Right. In television you are measured not by your ability with words and pictures so much as by your ability to get bodies to the camera on time.

With about three minutes to go, Gutierrez finished his interview, but before I could get to him he was back with the mayor, shaking hands in the middle of a huge crowd. Doing my best Squeaky Fromme imitation, I wove between the

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mayor's bodyguards, grabbed the candidate (who grabbed his wife and baby) and, without so much as a hello, shoved them into my car. With two minutes to air time I screamed into my walkie talkie: "Unit two to base, unit two to base, I have him. I repeat, I have him." I felt like Captain Kirk: Beam me out of this ward, Scotty.

I looked in the backseat. The candidate's wife was terrified and her baby was crying; Gutierrez was practically comatose. This is what TV—live TV—can do to people. Without hesitating, I had kidnapped and terrorized two adults, probably scarred a child for life, and, truth to tell, loved every minute of it. Only in the car, knowing the live shot was saved, did I feel awful. I started to babble. I told Gutierrez that he was a great candidate and that he would certainly win the election. True, I had just pulled him away from the mayor and, yes, I had forced him into my car against his will, but I wanted him to like me. After his 30-second spot on the news, I offered Gutierrez a ride back to the mayor. He said he'd rather walk.

Please, not a weather bunny

Walter Jacobson is right, of course. A story about city workers helping CHA board members park their cars is a quintessential Walter story. That's the problem. In many ways, Jacobson represents the best local TV has to offer. He works for a station with a tradition of excellence and has at his disposal generous resources and editorial leeway. In the past 13 years he has won 12 Emmy awards and the prestigious DuPont award for exemplary journalism. Still, I found that instead of trying to explain the complexities of the news he tended to oversimplify. Last spring, Jacobson criticized the federal government for doing little to collect on $60 billion in delinquent debt. He proved his point with outrageous examples, like the fact that some State Department employees are seven years late in repaying travel advances. He said nothing, however, about how this problem arose. Nor did he say whether the government is trying to fix it. Worse, the viewer came away with no sense for the gravity of the problem, since every Jacobson commentary—whether about the firing of the Chicago Bears' mascot or the attempted assassination of President Reagan—is equally grave.

Jacobson says only black and white issues can be explained through television, and in a way, he is right again. It is difficult to convey abstract ideas and complex truths with pictures. On WBBM's 10 p.m. broadcast July 30, for example, no mention was made of a report that was the lead story in the next day's *Tribune*: that the U.S. ran a record trade deficit in the first six months of this year. The trade deficit is considered one of the main dangers to U.S. economic expansion, but it is a hard story to illustrate, and in TV, no pictures means no story.

This is perhaps TV's greatest flaw, as problematic for the anchor in Peoria as it is for the correspondent in Paris. When Bob Kur was covering Lebanon for NBC news, he was once asked what went through his mind as he signed off each night from Beirut. "Good night, dear viewer," said Kur, "I only hope you read *The New York Times* in the morning." Of course, the viewer is always left with the opposite feeling. Like some existential bedtime story, WBBM's ten o'clock newscast probably sends viewers to sleep reassured, as if, no matter how horrible the news, they are somehow placed out of harm's way by the warm, friendly, and familiar faces of Walter and Bill and Don and Robin.

If you think I'm being too harsh, consider this: the single most influential local news figure is "Wheel of Fortune" hostess Vanna White. She has been able to do something no competing news station had been able to do in almost a decade: knock WBBM from the top of the local news ratings heap. Not wanting to miss the comely White for a moment, anxious viewers have switched from WBBM's newscast to WLS, which leads into "Wheel of Fortune." To combat this, WBBM has made all sorts of cosmetic changes, from fancy new graphics to delivering the news from different parts of the newsroom. Sometimes it seemed we were operating under a new slogan: It may not be real news, but at least it's pretty.

Which reminds me. Never go out with a TV reporter. My girlfriend is the medical reporter—recently changed to health editor—at WBBM, and I like her just the way she is. After all, *her* lips don't quiver. Unfortunately, management doesn't agree. One week her hair is too long, one week she doesn't weigh enough. Today it's her voice, tomorrow her eyes (one news director told her to wear make-up that made them look smaller). In July, she was sent to a television consultant in Dallas to work on her image. Waiting at the airport for her to return from Dallas, I paced up and down the terminal, worried that she had been transformed into a bald, anorexic weather bunny.

She wasn't, but I worry. After all, she works in local TV news. ■

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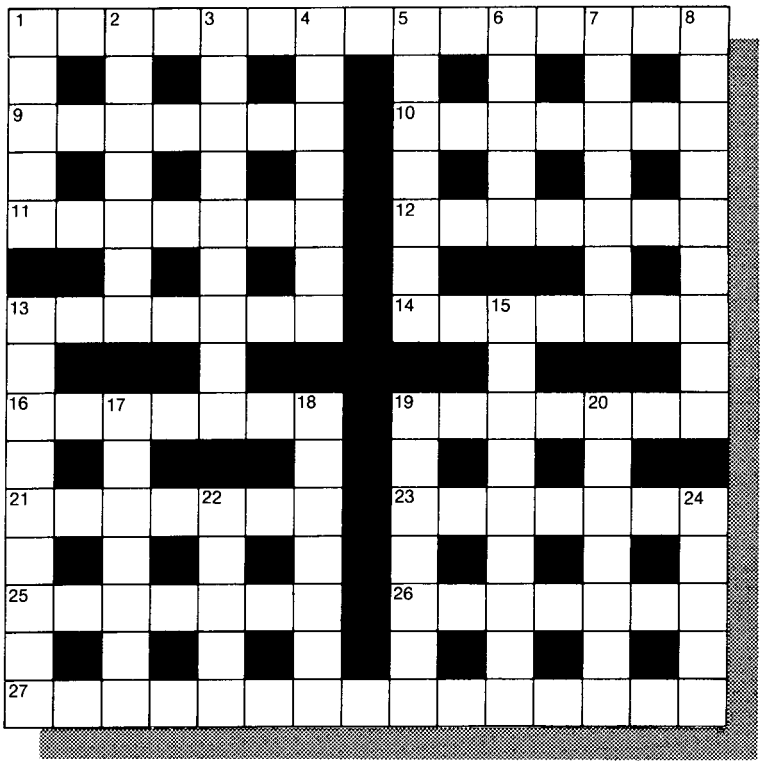
POLITICAL PUZZLE

by John Barclay

The numbers indicate the number of letters and words, e.g., (2, 3) means a two-letter word followed by a three-letter word. Groups of letters, e.g., USA, are treated as one word.



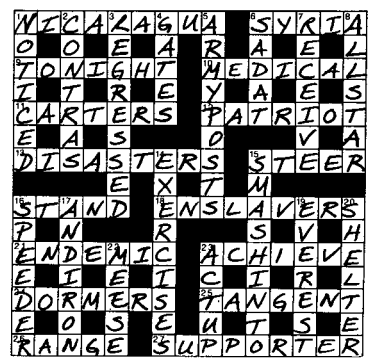
ACROSS

1. Decision makers replace U.S. computer there. (3, 7, 5)
9. Exact an oath to have on in evil. (5, 2)
10. When animal swallows flyer, who argues. (7)
11. Making plainer time of day. (7)
12. Manage to arrange leafing. (7)
13. Former Justice back in N.Y. subway heard case again. (7)
14. Highpoint in which Castro oft operates. (7)
16. Better than hot is without in former times. (4, 3)
19. Carefully waters tea for former Justice. (7)
21. Don usually precedes nine in quote. (7)
23. Drive to depths and evade Puerto Rico somehow. (7)
25. Place for hanging? (2, 5)
26. Measure cross Mideast land. (7)
27. Half-noted wealth set up standard for 1 Across. (3, 3, 2, 3, 4)

DOWN

1. Aesthetic bias is state secret. (5)
2. The top tennis star comprehends directions. (7)
3. Soviet type puts Scottish john under British shower. (9)
4. Went back on confused green editor. (7)
5. Headed toward far dome construction. (4, 3)
6. Can you be in, neighbor? (5)
7. Unusual $1000 hit put under stress. (7)
8. Prepare the poster card. (5-4)
13. Potential leader of 1 Across tends her quints. (9)
15. Ask too much for viper core array. (9)
17. Lithest slippery plant. (7)
18. Attached disturbed Tet hero. (7)
19. The least attractive dads set off. (7)
20. State in the manner of two degrees. (7)
22. Works a rope around. (5)
24. Improve a thousand in a sort of need. (5)

Answers to last month's puzzle:



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by E. Fuller Torrey, M.D.

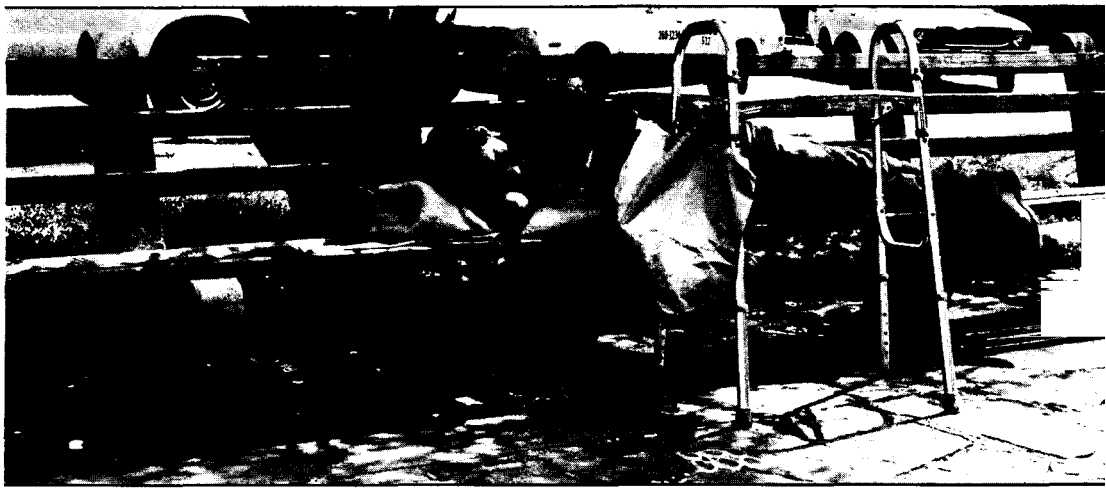

Photo: Anne Harrison

FINALLY, A CURE FOR THE HOMELESS:

BUT IT TAKES SOME STRONG MEDICINE

Cynthia* joined the legions of homeless on Washington's streets on March 26, 1985, when she was precipitously discharged from St. Elizabeth's Hospital. She walked down Martin Luther King Avenue holding a list of the city's public shelters and one week's worth of medication, wearing a light sweater and bedroom slippers because, as her hospital chart phrased it, "she refused to wear her sneakers." The weatherman had said the temperature would drop into the thirties. Passers-by glanced at Cynthia and her odd footwear, and walked past this latest graduate of St. Elizabeth's.

Hospital regulations do not sanction such hasty discharges, of course. A patient is supposed to have housing arranged and a follow-up appointment at a community mental health center. But Cynthia was, everyone agreed, a difficult patient—"very demanding" and "not cooperative at all," as the nursing staff wrote on her hospital chart. She had had difficulty getting along with other people even as a small girl. Then, in her early twenties, when she developed schizophrenia, she went from irascible to unlikable.

The nursing staff had been subtly pressuring the ward psychiatrist for weeks to discharge her. She refused to meet with her occupational therapy group, and was then told she had to attend or she would be released. Cynthia told the nursing staff what she thought of their threat. And she was out the door after one hour's notice.

Packing was easy, for she had come with nothing. Four years and six hospitals earlier she still owned some things—pictures, clothes, bagatelles of a private past—but now they are all gone, forgotten on some park bench or locked away in the unclaimed luggage room of another state hospital. It is difficult for her to keep things; the voices in her disordered brain distract her. Schizophrenia is a disease which affects the brain's chemistry so that its sufferers can no longer think clearly or logically. Cynthia often believes people are trying to kill her.

Cynthia joined the homeless who live on the streets and park benches of downtown Washington. They sleep, importune strangers, gesture to imaginary accomplices, shout angrily at the wind, forage through cans, and sit quietly with glazed eyes. They are daily reminders of the massive failure of one of the Great Society's

E. Fuller Torrey, M.D. is a Washington psychiatrist and writer. For the past three years he has run a clinic for mentally ill homeless women.

**The names of the homeless have been changed.*

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premier programs: the deinstitutionalization of mental patients out of state asylums and into local Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs).

The crisis of the mentally ill among the homeless is certainly not news. In fact, there has been a broad consensus for several years that deinstitutionalization is a major cause of homelessness. In 1979, *The New York Times* ran a three-part series headlined, "Mental-Patient Release Program Leaves Many to Face Harsh Fate." In 1980, studies in New York showed that 42 percent of the homeless were severely mentally ill, and in 1981, the *Times* editorialized: "The state's deinstitutionalization program has yet to develop adequate community service for discharged mental patients, yet it has also tightened up admission requirements to state hospitals." A 1983 Senate hearing showed that 30 to 50 percent of the homeless have severe mental illnesses, and congressional hearings in 1985 drew a *Washington Post* headline: "Experts Decry Dumping of Mental Patients: Streets Called Asylums of the 1980s." Just six days later Cynthia was released from St. Elizabeth's.

The news, then, is not that there is a clear relationship between failed mental health programs and the number of homeless mentally ill. Rather, it is that everybody acknowledges the fact, but does nothing about it. Hospitals like St. Elizabeth's continue to dump disturbed patients into the community, while the CMHCs show more interest in patients with mid-life crises than in those with serious mental illness.

More frustrating still, Cynthia and others like her could lead normal, productive lives if they would take certain medications. While this solution is medically simple, it is politically and legally difficult. Lawyers and politicians have objected on civil liberties grounds. But since homelessness among the mentally ill persists—despite the agreement on its causes—it is time for society to take a seemingly distasteful step: *force* many of these schizophrenics to take their medicine.

Profiles that discourage

Deinstitutionalization was conceived in idealism and implemented with the best of intentions. President John F. Kennedy spoke of "the abandonment of the mentally ill and the mentally retarded to the grim mercies of custodial institutions" in his 1963 State of the Union message. One month later, in a historic special message to Congress, Kennedy proposed a network of CMHCs as "a bold new approach." When carried out, "reliance on the cold mercy of custodial isolation will be supplanted by the open warmth of community concern and capability. . . . It has been demonstrated that two out of three schizophrenics—our largest category of mentally ill—can be treated and released within six months. . . . If we launch a broad new mental health program now, it will be possible within a decade or two to reduce the number of patients now under custodial care by 50 percent or more."

At congressional hearings on enactment of the CMHC legislation in March 1963, Health, Education, and Welfare Secretary Anthony Celebrezze testified: "It is clear that huge custodial institutions are not suited for the treatment of mental illness. . . .Therefore the national program for mental health [CMHCs] is centered on a wholly new emphasis and approach—care and treatment of most mentally ill persons in their home communities."

The CMHC program was passed by Congress and turned over to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) to administer. It was clear from the beginning, however, that neither NIMH nor the CMHCs had any interest in the severely mentally ill. NIMH wrote its regulations so loosely that the local centers soon geared themselves to people with "problems of living" who could not afford the fees of private psychiatrists. The program that had originally been set up for patients with schizophrenia, manic-depressive psychosis, and other severe mental disorders, became instead a program for married couples having difficulty communicating, young adults concerned about their relations with the opposite sex, and middle-aged individuals undergoing existential crises. In states such as Mississippi, where mental health officials have tried to gear the centers more toward the seriously ill, the staffs that run the clinics have rebelled, claiming they are not equipped to treat such patients. Set up for the suffering sick, Kennedy's program was instead coopted by the worried well.

As early as 1969, an internal NIMH study showed that one-third of patients with schizophrenia released from state hospitals were given no referral for further care. In that same year, a report of the American Psychiatric Association claimed that "some centers [CMHCs] consciously discriminated against poor and chronically ill patients who came to them for help." In 1972, internal NIMH memos complained of CMHCs that abused federal funds by building swimming pools or by allowing psychiatrists to hospitalize their private patients.

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"The only people with improved lives," said one memo, "appear to be the professionals who run the program." In 1973, further NIMH studies showed that there was no relationship between most CMHCs and the ongoing release of patients from state hospitals, and the *American Journal of Psychiatry* published an article titled, "Care of the Chronically Mentally Ill: A National Disgrace." In 1974, the Health Research Group, a public interest organization based in Washington, published a scathing study on the CMHC program that concluded: "the deficiencies of the program are now too glaring to be brushed aside."

Meanwhile, seriously ill patients continued to be dumped from state hospitals into the community despite clear indications that CMHCs were not following up with treatment. Where state and federal officials thought these disabled people were going to get care is a mystery. On the day Cynthia was released from St. Elizabeth's, she may have wondered too; President Kennedy's "open warmth of community concern and capability" was not readily apparent. Most of the women's shelters were full, but she was finally accepted at a small church shelter where the women sleep on mats on the floor. Like most shelters in Washington, the church sends the women out at 7:30 in the morning and doesn't allow them to store anything. If they have any possessions, they must take them wherever they go during the day. If they are fortunate enough to have an extra 50 cents, they may rent a public locker at the bus station, but that is a luxury few can afford.

Nancy has lived at this shelter for more than two years. She likes clothes and hangs onto them by wearing several layers. She is a familiar site around Lafayette Park, which is across from the White House, and the Smithsonian museums, happily talking to herself and carrying her bags. She was hospitalized years ago but hated it; she refuses all entreaties to take medicine. There is nothing wrong with her, she says, although it is sometimes difficult to get her to focus on your questions, which compete with the several other inaudible voices with which she is carrying on conversations.

Marion also lives there. She came to the United States in her twenties as an immigrant from Eastern Europe. But, she says, somebody put electric wires into a chair she was sitting in, causing voices in her brain to talk to her. Ever since, she says she must watch for people following her or trying to poison her food. Most days she hides from them in the public libraries and art galleries.

How many homeless people are there in Washington? Nobody really knows, but it is estimated there are more than 3,000. A 1985 survey by the Health Research Group found that almost two-thirds of the women and one-third of the men had schizophrenia; all of them had been in mental hospitals like St. Elizabeth's. Washington is not unique. In Boston, 36 percent of shelter residents were diagnosed as schizophrenic, and in Philadelphia, 37 percent. In New York City, 50 percent of those in public shelters have been either deinstitutionalized from mental hospitals or denied admission because no beds were available. The Department of Health and Human Services says 33 to 66 percent of all shelter residents are severely mentally ill.

In addition to shelter residents with schizophrenia, there is another large group of homeless. In Washington, one-third of the men and a smaller percentage of women are alcoholics. The rest have lost their jobs, housing, and hope, and are drifting. Gentrification of the inner city and the demolition of low-rent housing has compounded an already bad situation.

Mary says she has been looking for affordable housing for more than a year. She is eligible to receive $359 each month as Supplemental Security Income because of her schizophrenia, though she denies there is anything wrong with her. She can tell you what is available for that income level and she doesn't like any of it. So for several months she has slept on the mezzanine of National Airport; the guards leave her alone as long as she is quiet. She feels safe there from the Israeli agents who she believes inject her with special medicine while she's sleeping. You barely notice her sitting in the airport during the day, apparently waiting for a plane to arrive. Pleasant and intelligent, she is a college graduate with three children. Her family lost track of her for several months until one of her daughters, when catching a flight back to college, ran into her.

Mary is not the only well-educated member at the homeless club. Virginia has a master's degree in English from the University of Wisconsin, Joan graduated with high honors from Washington University in St. Louis, Denise was trained in law at Howard University and was one of the first black lawyers accepted by a prestigious Washington firm, John is a fully-trained psychiatrist, yet often sleeps in the woods in northern Virginia, and Dan was a classmate of mine at Princeton.

Dan's life is especially poignant to me. I remember him as a varsity athlete, a member of one of the most prestigious eating clubs, and a class leader. He majored in history and wrote his

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senior thesis on a complicated aspect of nineteenth century economic history. Yet for 20 years he has roamed the nation, living in public shelters and sleeping in the woods, trying to escape the voices and messages he says are beamed to his brain by the FBI. Occasionally he calls me when he is in Washington, hoping I can explain why the FBI is doing this to him. He refuses all offers of help, for he trusts no one. He has absolutely no insight into his illness.

There are also, of course, many homeless at the other end of the educational spectrum and at all points in between. Andrea dropped out of school in the fourth grade and occasionally turns to prostitution to support her fondness for alcohol. Susan ran away from home when she was 13 because of what her father might do when he learned she was pregnant. And Richard lives at a shelter between stays in the D.C. jail and St. Elizabeth's. Homelessness is truly an equal opportunity employer.

Homelessness lends itself nicely to political posturing. Governor Mario Cuomo of New York says that "homelessness is by its nature a crisis in housing" and implies that the reduction in federal funds for low-cost housing has exacerbated the problem. Republicans point out that deinstitutionalization began under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. President Reagan, of course, says that those living on the street have elected to do so and denies that his safety net is inadequate. Meanwhile, the numbers of homeless increase.

Troll busters

The biggest tragedy is that many of these lives are salvageable. Given a regular supply of lithium, a standard medication that restores a proper chemical balance in the brain, Donna was transformed from a shelter resident to a GS-5 in the Department of Commerce and has worked steadily for two years. On antipsychotic medication, Lily is holding two restaurant jobs and has moved from a shelter to her own apartment, while Ann supports her teenage son by working as a nurse's aide. The lithium and antipsychotic medication do not cure mental illness, they control the symptoms. They work the same way that insulin does in diabetics. I would estimate that one-fourth of the women I have known who live in public shelters could be returned to at least part-time employment if they took medication regularly. But most of the homeless who could benefit from medication will not accept it. Their brains tell them there is nothing wrong with them. Their voices whisper that medication is poison. Mary's family tried several times to have her involuntarily hospitalized and treated. She had been on medicine in the past and was much better, even able to hold a job. But she lived alone, with no one to force her to keep taking her medication. Because she didn't believe she was sick, she stopped.

Although the law once said that people could be hospitalized against their will if they were "in need of treatment" or "gravely disabled," well-meaning lawyers, concerned about the patients' civil liberties, have changed that. Now, in most states, no one can be involuntarily hospitalized and treated unless he is a danger to himself or to others. So Mary now has the right to sit at National Airport, safely evading the Israeli agents. And we now have a wonderfully free collection of individuals congregating in the nation's parks and streets. The defenders of civil liberties may be proud of that, but they don't have to live on the streets. Homeless people frequently freeze to death in the winter. Homeless women are frequently raped. Stores in California sell "troll buster" T-shirts to honor youths who beat up helpless men living under bridges. Earlier this year, the *New England Journal of Medicine* described "dumpster-diving injuries" suffered by the homeless searching for food. A homeless woman in New York was raped and killed by three teenage boys, and in Hyannis, Massachusetts, two street people were beaten to death. The local newspaper editorialized that it was like having "rabbits forced to live in the company of dogs."

Liberty and cruelty have become confused. The laws need to be changed so that obviously disabled individuals can be hospitalized and treated before they become a danger to themselves or others. If they are gravely disabled and refuse help because they can't understand their illness, then psychiatric staff or the police should be allowed to take them—involuntarily—to a hospital for evaluation. Release from a hospital should be made contingent upon the the patients' agreeing to continue to take medication. If the patients stop taking their medication (as determined by blood tests) then they can also be returned to the hospital.

Partial conservatorship or guardianship, and similar legal mechanisms for ensuring treatment have all been shown to work. These solutions, however, have been opposed by the American Civil Liberties Union, and others who say that involuntary treatment infringes on an individual's autonomy and right to make his own decisions. Assuming, however, that someone with

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Photo: Anne Harriso

Given a regular supply of medication, Donna was transformed from a shelter resident to a GS-5 in the Department of Commerce, while Lily is holding two jobs and has moved from a shelter to her own apartment.

schizophrenia is capable of making intelligent decisions regarding his or her own needs is like assuming that a person with heart disease has normal cardiac function and can run a marathon. When diabetes causes a person to go into a coma we do not defend the person's right to remain in a coma. Yet when schizophrenia jumbles the brain's chemistry, we insist that the person has the right to remain sick even when he has a history of getting well on medication.

There must be checks and balances available in the system, of course, such as court hearings and specified review periods. Nobody would advocate returning to the 1930s when someone could be hospitalized involuntarily for an indefinite period on the strength of a single psychiatrist's signature. But the present state of affairs is unacceptable.

Medication, of course, is not a panacea for homelessness. Low-cost housing must also be developed and made available to the homeless. Gentrification of the inner cities benefits some, but not those who have been displaced into the streets. Housing must certainly be assured for patients discharged from state hospitals. Mayor Edward Koch of New York is one of the few leaders who have proposed a housing program specifically for the mentally ill homeless. It has not been implemented, however, and New York continues to live with the irony of using part of Creedmore State Hospital as a public men's shelter. Some hallucinating shelter residents are sleeping in the same rooms they slept in when Creedmore was a mental hospital, only now there are no nurses and no medication. When the District of Columbia takes over St. Elizabeth's in October 1987, it will discharge 500 patients into the community. There are no housing plans for them. Officially, no one is certain where they will go. But unofficially everyone knows.

Another part of the solution is to provide enough beds for patients in need of hospitalization. Recently in New York City, Juan Gonzalez, a homeless man with schizophrenia who told authorities that "Jesus wants me to kill," was not admitted to the hospital because of a lack of beds. Two days later he fatally stabbed two people on the Staten Island Ferry. Nine days later, a *New York Times* headline stated: "Hospital Occupancy Drops to 20-Year Low in City." It seems that hospital beds are available by the hundreds—but not for psychiatric patients who don't have private insurance.

Adequate community mental health services are clearly essential as well. Despite having had four federally funded CMHCs, the District of Columbia ranks near the bottom nationally for such services. Psychiatric services should be available in public shelters, and mobile vans should reach out to the mentally ill living on the streets as they do in Philadelphia and New York.

Mental health professionals should also take an interest in public patients as well as their private ones. The District of Columbia, for instance, has more mental health professionals per capita than any city in America—five times as many psychiatrists and four times as many psychologists per capita as the national average. But tell that to a homeless mentally ill person who cannot afford $100 per hour on upper Connecticut Avenue. Perhaps it is time to require professionals in the District to spend a small amount of time doing public service each month as a condition of their license to practice.

In 1948, Albert Deutsch, a crusading newsman, investigated state mental hospitals and wrote *The Shame of the States*. In it he said: "In some of the wards there were scenes that rivaled the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps—hundreds of naked mental patients herded into huge, barnlike, filth-infested wards, in all degrees of deterioration, untended and untreated, stripped of every vestige of human decency, many in stages of semi-starvation. The writer heard state hospital doctors frankly admit that the animals of nearby piggeries were better fed, housed, and treated than many of the patients in their wards." In 1986 the "shame of the states" has become the "shame of the streets." ■

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MEMO OF THE MONTH

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office for Administration and Finance

One Ashburton Place

Boston, Massachusetts 02108

COMPTROLLER'S DIVISION
ELLEN M. O'CONNOR
COMPTROLLER

April 9, 1986

To: All Spending Agencies

From: William N.Hardin, Director Support Services Bureau

Subject: Daily Statement of Transactions dated March 33, 1986

Please be advised that a problem occurred during the processing of the Comptroller's Budgeatry Control Accounting system update of March 33, 1986. As a result of this problem, the transactions posted to the Daily Statement of Transactions (DST) of that date were reprocessed during the system update of March 34, 1986. The effect of this processing sequence is that the DST dated March 33, 1986 is void and should be disrgarded. The ending account balances of March 32, 1986 are the beginning account balances that appear on your DST dated March 34, 1986 and all transactions originally posted on March 33, 1986 will appear on statements dated March 34, March 35 and March 36,1986.

Please accept our apology for any inconvenience this situation has caused you. If you should have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Mr. James Roach at 727-5000 extension 360.

WNH:cCc

#1124

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The story behind the slap at the Canadian embassy

Damn you, Connie. You've ruined our foreign policy!

Photo: Judy Sloan

Thwack, thump. It was the sound of one hand slapping. The press corps—a wire service reporter and a handful of photographers straggling along the fringes of the Canadian ambassador's front lawn on Washington's Rock Creek Drive—snapped to attention. Notebooks and cameras had temporarily fallen slack during a let-up in the parade of black limousines disgorging tuxedos and sequins that had come to pay tribute to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney on his triumphant official visit to Washington. On the porch just outside the front door, the silk-sheathed arm of the ambassador's wife, Sondra Gotlieb, had suddenly been raised. The witnesses watched in disbelief as it struck out in the direction of the pale, powdered cheek of Connie Gibson Connor, the embassy social secretary. Flesh met flesh in a forehand, then a backhand. Thwack, thump. The sound rent the stillness of the mild March night air.

There was some added tympany: the skittering of an amethyst and pearl earring down the porch steps, the swift tattoo of Connor's evening slippers as they too fled down the stairs and toward the back servants' entrance. The next morning, as the wire service machines of *Canadian Press* clattered out the story that a fearful deskman had spiked the night before, there were those across the stunned capital who detected another sound: nails being driven into the coffin of the social reputation of Sondra and Allan Gotlieb, the diplomatic superstars who had been anointed by *Vanity Fair* and *The Wall Street Journal* as the hottest couple on Washington's embassy row.

Intimations of social mortality now hang over the Canadian embassy, where the heady traffic in place cards and engraved invitations has slowed to a stately minimum. When promised anonymity, the doyennes of capital society confide that they will be relieved when the Gotliebs leave their post in November so Washingtonians can stop circling the wagons in strained displays of manners, loyalty, and noblesse oblige. "I can't abandon her now," one sighed to a friend. "Everybody can go ahead and be nice to them now that we know they're leaving," said Sonia Adler, depar-

Marci McDonald is the Washington Bureau Chief for Macleans, *Canada's newsweekly.*

by Marci McDonald

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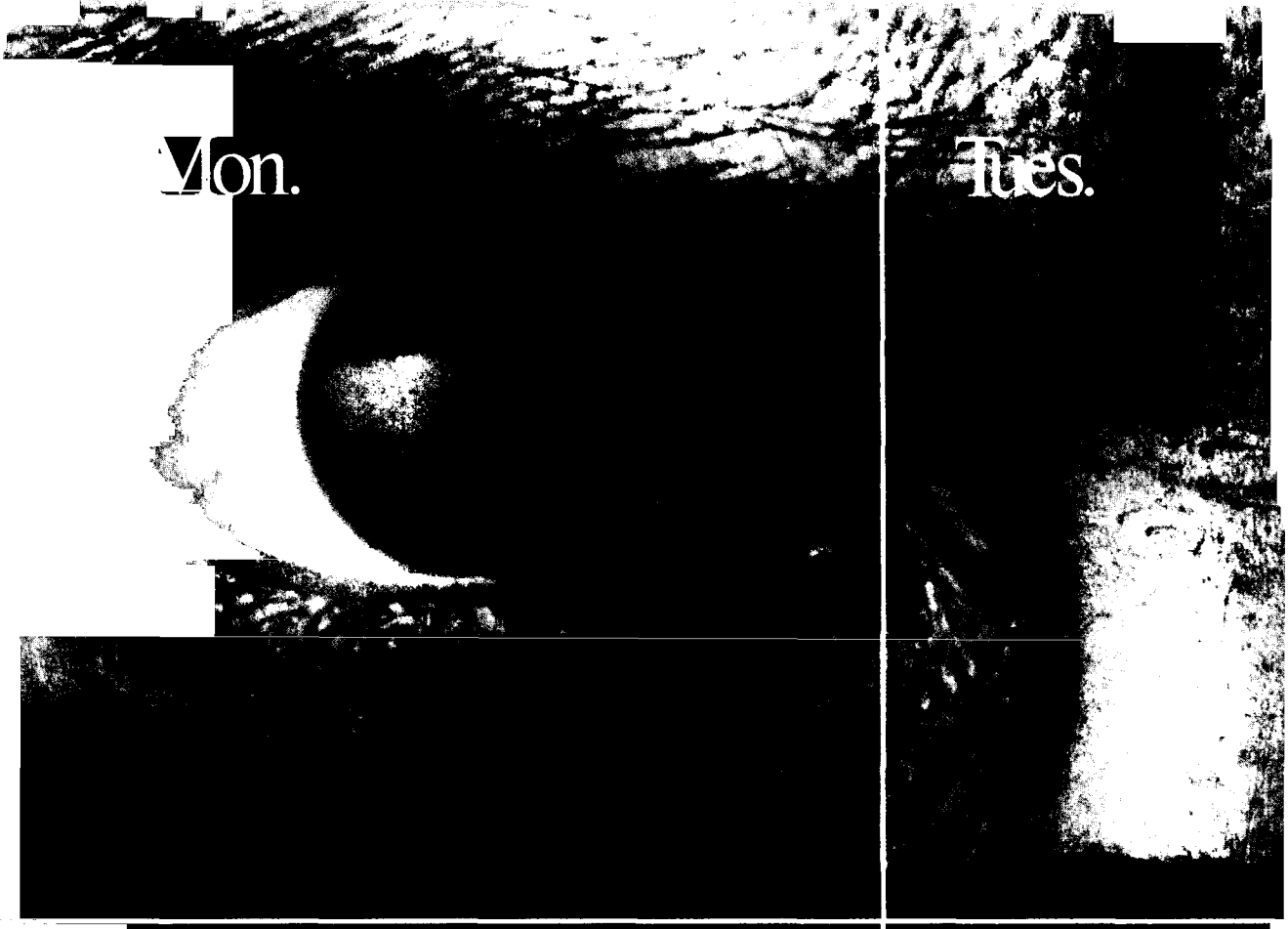

Thurs.

Fri.

The week we looked terrorism in the eye and proposed a way to make it blink.

Its face has grown familiar. In the endless images of twisted wreckage and shattered bodies left scattered in its wake.

It claims to work for many causes, but wields only one tool—violence. And its target is you. Your family, your children, your life.

The face of terrorism. It's become a major force in our world, and Newsweek has detailed its violent development. But we didn't stop there. Because when Newsweek looks at a story, we see beyond the face of it.

Beyond the problems of the situations, or even the motivations—we see and search for solutions. Recently, we proposed 10 concrete steps designed to combat terrorism. Among them: improved intelligence gathering, cracking down on unsafe airports and greater pressure on terrorist allies.

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Wed.

Sat.

That's our prescriptive approach to the news—reporting not only what's happening, but what can be done about what's happening.

And over the years, we've applied that prescriptive approach to such varied and difficult dilemmas as civil

and crime.

Reporting the bad news and suggesting good answers. Part of the reason Newsweek's won more awards for journalistic

excellence than any other news magazine.

And a good reason for you to start taking a look at the world through our eye

Newsweek

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ting editor of *Washington Dossier* magazine. Even for those who have only disdain for the vagaries of guest lists and other such social ephemera, The Slap might well offer a lesson that is both unsettling and instructive about how business gets done in that arena of geopolitical gamesmanship that the ambassador's wife had christened Powertown.

Not only had the Gotliebs succeeded in reaching such dizzying heights on Washington's treacherous social slopes that one-third of the cabinet could be seen at their parties, but in the process, they had provided the public a rare glimpse of Powertown's inner workings. In her twice-monthly satires of life in the nation's capital for *The Washington Post*'s op-ed page, Sondra Gotlieb had set herself up as the chronicler of the comedy of manners that was being played out in the rarified inner circles that govern the country.

Like some anthropologist turning a scholarly eye on distant and exotic tribal rituals, Gotlieb had examined Washington's unwieldy and scattered power centers and observed a universe where—as she wrote in fictional lettters to a friend named Beverly back home—dinner guests have to keep in mind that they're "sitting next to a job, not a person," and hostesses are obliged to put their invitees at round tables "so that no one feels below the salt." In her sly vision, Powerful Jobs, Serious Media, World Famous Socialites, and Most Expensive Lobbyists, not to mention the ubiquitous Close-Tos, schemed their way through Georgetown's salons while she and her husband, Mr. Ambassador, played the bemused outsiders stumbling through the local folkways. Winking at the capital's tendency to dismiss spouses of the powerful as mere appendages, Gotlieb had dubbed herself Wife Of.

But, in fact, she had written herself a more complex starring part: the role of Bumbling Innocent Abroad who, in her guilelessness, sees everything clearly. It was a satirist's role in the tradition of Mark Twain—the hayseed who shrewdly lampoons the mores of sophisticated society—and it had catapulted Sondra Gotlieb to stardom in Washington. Then, in the wake of The Slap, it backfired just as swiftly. In that split-second brutal gesture, she had revealed that the character who had become the toast of the capital's glitterati was to some extent a fraud. Her gaffe had been provoked by news that an invited guest, Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Richard Darman, had rescinded his acceptance to dinner. Her reaction wasn't that of a daffy Alice in socio-political Wonderland who remained above the city's crude and cynical code. The slap, said one longtime observer of the social scene, "showed that not only was she not above all this, but that she was participating zealously on precisely the level she sneered at."

Much of the city felt that it had somehow been conned. It seemed that the likeable Canadians, who had charmed their way onto its guest lists by seeming not to understand the local customs, had in fact understood them so well that they had taken everybody in. In fact, the Gotliebs' own social progress provides a textbook example of how an outsider—American or foreign—could go about gaining entry to the corridors of influence in Washington. Theirs was no case of mere personal social climbing. They had deliberately chosen to use the city's social scene as the key instrument of a high-risk new Canadian foreign policy. Allan Gotlieb had christened it Public Diplomacy. In her columns, Sondra Gotlieb gave it another name: Partying to Win.

The court of Ronald Reagan

Sondra Gotlieb's second comic novel was published three years ago in the United States under the title *A Woman of Substance*. In Canada, it had appeared two years earlier as *First Lady, Last Lady*. In the book, her heroine, Nini Pike, had berated her husband for accepting a diplomatic post. "Why on earth would you want to become the ambassador?" she'd asked. "Give Washington to the Belnaps. . . Stephen and Moira can play bridge with the congressmen and run after the senators. That's what ambassadors do. All prestige and no power. High-class lobbyists. Let Moira give the tea parties and burst into tears when the cabinet wives don't show up."

A few months later, when Allan Gotlieb's appointment to Washington was announced, Nini Pike's query echoed through Ottawa: why on earth would he want to be ambassador? One of Canada's senior mandarins, he had held the most important deputy ministries. For the previous five years he had exercised more power than any ambassador could dream of by running the country's foreign policy as undersecretary of state for external affairs.

But in that position, Gotlieb—a graduate of Berkeley and Harvard Law School, and a Rhodes scholar who had read international law at Oxford—had analyzed Canadian foreign policy with the same rigor he brought to parsing clauses in "cod war" treaties. His conclusion was that the country's traditional quiet diplomacy wasn't working with the United States. Even though it

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ranks as America's leading trading partner, Canada was winning little attention for its trade problems or the acid rain that was killing its forests and lakes. A decade earlier, a single across-the-board U.S. tariff on imports had wounded his country's industries. In retaliation, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau had responded with some protectionist measures of his own: a contentious National Energy Policy that underpriced Canadian oil and limited American energy ownership in Canada; and a review board to screen all foreign investment. The American government and business community were enraged. When Allan Gotlieb left for Washington in 1981, Canadian-American relations had sunk to their worst level since World War II.

Gotlieb argued that Canada's interests were so intimately entwined with U.S. domestic policy that his country could no longer rely on making its case discreetly through the State Department. He advocated a new public diplomacy through which Canada would work the American system just like any lobbyist for Exxon: roaming the halls of Congress, making its case to the Cabinet, and cultivating U.S. groups whose interests coincided with Canada's. But unlike lobbyists—most of whom traditionally have kept their names out of the paper—Canada couldn't rally any constituents to pressure policymakers. Instead, Gotlieb urged a strong media and social presence in Washington as a lever of influence

For Canadians, with their national inferiority complex, it was an audacious foreign policy move. But Trudeau, who had never taken a low-profile stance in his own political life, bought it. When the architect proposed himself to carry it out, the prime minister waved Allan Gotlieb off to Washington as ambassador confident that public diplomacy was in the best possible hands. But Ottawa officials now acknowledge that at the time none of them realized exactly what Gotlieb meant when he talked about Washington's social universe as one of the city's power centers.

After all, hadn't entertaining always been the modus operandi of diplomats? Hadn't Talleyrand told Louis XVIII, as he was dispatched to the Congress of Vienna, "I have more need for casseroles than written instructions?" Washington's history is littered with foreign envoys who have made a splash in the small town on the Potomac with their grace, their pomp, or their tables: Lord Harlech's Kennedy family connections and elegant galas that bathed the British embassy in the reflected glow of Camelot; the petrodollar extravaganzas of Beluga caviar, champagne, and glitz thrown by the shah of Iran's envoy Ardeshir Zahedi.

Many Americans had also used entertaining as a tool to gain access and information. When civil rights lawyer, Joseph L. Rauh Jr., first came to Washington in the 1930s to clerk at the Supreme Court, Justice Felix Frankfurter advised him that if he wanted to understand what was going on in Washington he would have to read the social pages. But Jimmy Carter's four-year effort to de-imperialize the presidency with a tide of down-home beer and peanuts had temporarily dimmed the chandeliers. A newcomer who wanted entree to the corridors of power during the Carter era would not have found it wise to play the social card. But as soon as Ronald and Nancy Reagan swept into Washington in a flurry of limousines, designer furs and millionaire friends, the tuxedo was taken out of mothballs as a political tool. Partying to Win was a tactic tailor-made for the court of Ronald Reagan.

But no one, including Canadian government officials, had quite realized that the ambassador didn't see the social scene as just another capital power center to lobby; he had concluded it was, as he told a Canadian journalist, "the key to all their centers of power. It became clear to me that where Washington comes together is in the evenings, socially."

There were only two flaws in the plan. One was that it constituted a high-risk foreign policy: increasing the country's visibility meant that every misstep would be noted. The other was summed up by a veteran Ottawa technocrat in one world: Sondra. "As soon as you understood how much depended on her," he said, "you knew you had a highly unstable, volatile instrument of policy. Everybody knew she was unpredictable."

I'm Caspar Weinberger

There are more than 150 embassies in Powertown, and if the Media don't know you exist, the Powerful Jobs won't know either.

—Sondra Gotlieb, Wife Of

As Sondra Gotlieb tells it, her social celebrity just happened—like one of her inevitable mishaps. She had never been in the city before and their only previous posting had been years earlier in Geneva. There, she had distinguished herself by failing to pick up the dinner-party signal that the ladies were to leave the table when the port was served, and then by blundering into the men's washroom where Allan and his confreres caught her washing her hands in the urinal.

When the Gotliebs threw their first big dinner party for then-Canadian External Affairs

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Minister Mark MacGuigan early in the new year, it had a certain quality of Geneva redux. A blinding snowstorm blew guests onto their doorstep early, when Allan was still upstairs on the phone. Sondra didn't recognize a single face except MacGuigan's. When she sighted a man who cut an appealing figure admiring her husband's collection of art nouveau boxes and frames, she sidled up to him and confessed that she didn't know any of her guests; would he introduce her? Ben Bradlee, executive editor of *The Washington Post*, found it such a novel approach that he delightedly obliged. He and his wife, Sally Quinn, watched in amusement as she greeted one of her invitees. "Hi, I'm the hostess. Who are you?" she extended her hand. "I'm Caspar Weinberger," the secretary of defense replied, a response that later became immortalized in her column. The next day, Bradlee sent a *Post* "Style" section reporter around to Rock Creek Drive to do a profile on the offbeat new ambassador's wife, whose undiplomatic candor verged on the outlandish.

Sondra Gotlieb lived up to Bradlee's advance billing. She told the *Post's* Stephanie Mansfield how, at 18, when she was flunking out of the university back home in Winnipeg, her parents had virtually arranged her marriage to Allan, then an Oxford don she had known only nine days. She made no attempt to hide her befuddlement about Washington protocol and her ineptitude with servants. And then there was the story about the time she met California Governor Jerry Brown in her bathrobe. . . .

The day after the profile appeared on the front page of the "Style" section, the "Today Show" asked her to appear as a guest. More importantly, the *Post* editorial board invited Allan Gotlieb to drop by for a talk. Within weeks, *The New York Times* also had recorded the new stand-up comedy act that had moved onto embassy row: Allan the earnest bespectacled straight man, Sondra butting in to observe, "For some reason, people's eyes glaze over when you say Canada. Maybe we should invade South Dakota or something." The Gotliebs were off and running on the black-tie dinner circuit, propelled by her daffy media persona. "Washington likes originals," notes a former embassy staffer. "And people were curious about Sondra, so they invited the Gotliebs out. That *Washington Post* story catapulted them right into the middle of the social scene and positioned them in a way that would have taken months to achieve by normal diplomatic channels. After that, they had it made."

In retrospect, some scholars of the city's society speculate that the Gotliebs had taken to heart one of the key instructions published in gossip columnist Diana McLellan's witty 1982 book on the city, *Ear On Washington*. Her advice: cultivate an image. To observers, the image that Sondra Gotlieb presented was one with a noble tradition in the capital, most recently personified by the late, irrepressible Alice Roosevelt Longworth, who kept a cushion beside her with the needlepoint invitation: "If you don't have anything nice to say, sit by me." But one Canadian journalist who showed up to interview the ambassador's wife at the time found a slightly different persona—or personae. "Sondra would try one mode on and when it didn't work on me, she would slip into another," she recalls. "She kept trying on roles to see what I would react to." Years later when I asked Gotlieb how, as a well-traveled cookbook writer who had penned award-winning fiction, she could have left the American media with the impression of such an unsophisticated scatterbrain, she explained that just before leaving Canada she had made a cross-country promotional tour for her second novel. "I was still thinking in terms of a book tour," she said. "I thought, 'You've got to give them an angle.' "

Indeed, former embassy officials don't remember her social celebrity as an accident at all. As soon as the Gotliebs arrived in Washington, the embassy's then-press counselor, Patrick Gossage, was charged with getting them not only ink, but also the cream of the city's media for their guest lists. Gotlieb wasn't interested in beat reporters or managing editors; he targeted a nucleus of the opinion-making stars and top honchos: Joseph Kraft, William Safire, James Reston, Ben Bradlee and *Post* publisher Katharine Graham, whom Sondra later characterized in her letters to Beverly as "the famous press rather than the working press."

It was no accident that Bradlee had been at the MacGuigan dinner. Gossage and his team courted key names in the press with the same determination that other embassy staffers blitzed congressmen. In fact, Gotlieb had emphasized that the Serious Media was even more critical to Public Diplomacy than Capitol Hill. No matter what party was in power, the opinion-makers remained. "They have constancy," the ambassador told a Canadian journalist. "Everything you say about their power is an understatement."

Gotlieb asked an American official he had met to introduce him to William Safire. After the official was ousted from power, he soon found himself dropped from the Gotliebs' guest lists while Safire went on to become a frequent diner.

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Over wine and Manitoba golden caviar, Allan Gotlieb discreetly pleaded his government's case on the issues of the day—no strong-arming, just some gentle nudges. He found, as Sondra Gotlieb put it, "Over drinks people will tell you things that they won't tell you at the office."

In seducing the media, the Gotliebs enjoyed two strokes of luck. One was that virtually the only couple they knew when they arrived—introduced through mutual journalist friends in Ottawa—was a major catch: Joseph Kraft and his artist wife Polly. The other was that many of the rising media stars turned out to be Canadian-born. When one of them, Peter Jennings, was named ABC News anchorman, the Gotliebs threw a party in his honor that attracted most of the major media luminaries on the eastern seaboard.

Their efforts resulted in more stories on Canada, including growing attention to acid rain, and Gotlieb was instrumental in convincing the *Post* to establish a full-fledged Canadian bureau. No ambassador in the country's history has ever won such laudatory press.

But much of the value of attracting the cream of the capital's journalists lay in their sheer celebrity. By developing a reputation for attracting them to their soirees, the Gotliebs were practicing a technique known to veteran Washington hostesses as baiting their guest lists.

How's your acid rain?

"In Washington," Popsie said, "if you want people to come to your party, you have to make it in honor of somebody very well known."

"You mean the president?"

"Don't be stupid... try the vice president."

—Sondra Gotlieb, Wife Of

On the paneled walls of the downstairs library in the ambassador's residence, elegant Victorian beauties pose in their finery at glittering cosmopolitan gatherings. The stunning scenes form part of Allan Gotlieb's private store of works by the nineteenth century artist James Tissot—the world's largest collection of his prints. At the time his posting was announced, some Ottawa officials had dismissed him as a dry technocrat, unable to cut the social mustard in Washington. But they didn't understand that his passion for an artist who once was scorned as a superficial society painter would mean that he took to the cocktail-and-canape circuit with gusto, frequently quoting Jane Austen: "Everything happens at parties."

In Polly Kraft, whose social panache had burnished her own husband's journalistic career, the Gotliebs found what the city's social experts consider essential: a well-connected guide. She took Sondra in hand, enlightening her about the distinction between A and B guest lists, and more importantly introducing her to another power center that the ambassador had targeted: the grandes dames who, with the press and lobbyists, make up the "permanent village." A journalist recalls that, talking about Washington's hostesses, Allan Gotlieb rhymed off their names "as if he was talking about the pope." Not long afterward, two of them became regulars in the Gotliebs' salon: Evangeline Bruce, the widow of former super-ambassador David K. Bruce, and Susan Mary Alsop, who noted of their parties, "You know when you go there, you will meet people who are crucial." As Diana McLellan summed up their status in Powertown: "They're as in as you can be when you're out of power."

Despite those heady social successes in early 1982, the ambassador found that the key players in the administration still weren't returning his phone calls. His frustration mounted as he watched Sondra—drawn into a network of ladies' lunches by Polly Kraft—routinely breaking bread with the wives of Powerful Jobs he couldn't get on the line.

When she came home from yet another afternoon with cabinet wives, he finally suggested that they throw a dinner in honor of one of them. The name Gotlieb proposed showed his canny reading of access in the Reagan era: Jean French Smith, wife of William French Smith, then the attorney general. Smith's cachet came from the fact that not only was her husband one of the president's closest friends, he was head of his Kitchen

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Cabinet. Said one social scribe: "They were the key couple in the first Reagan term. If Adolf Hitler came to town and the Smiths took him under their wing, he'd have it made."

Sondra says she initially balked at such a gesture. "I thought, 'Gee, that's pushy.' I had a really Canadian attitude." But she has always done whatever was necessary to nurture her husband's career. The next afternoon, she gathered up her courage and dialed Jean French Smith's number at the Jefferson Hotel. Her hands, she says, were trembling. "I was really scared. To call somebody up and say you'd like to give a dinner in her honor when you're not even sure if she'll remember you—that takes chutzpah." She pauses before adding what, in retrospect, became obvious: "Except in Washington." Said Hope Ridings Miller, a former social editor of *The Washington Post*, "It's a city where, if you have enough nerve to invite people, they think you're in a position to ask them."

Jean French Smith was delighted by the offer and produced a list of her friends to invite, including other cabinet members and the troika then running the White House—James Baker, Michael Deaver, and Edwin Meese. That guest list provided the wings on which the Gotliebs soared in the inner circles of the Reagan administration for the next four years. Says Sondra: "It all took off from there. It may sound like a pretty cynical approach, but we discovered parties were a way to get yourself known and accepted. It's a way for your husband to get his views across."

Over wine and Manitoba golden caviar, Gotlieb discreetly pleaded his government's case on the issues of the day—no strong-arming, just some gentle nudges. He found, as Sondra put it, "Over drinks people will tell you things that they won't tell you at the office." One dinner, he said, provided a breakthrough in U.S.-Canadian relations when a presidential aide took him aside and explained what irked the administration about Trudeau: they didn't like their allies criticizing them in public.

The day after the parties, back at the chancery, Gotlieb would follow up with a vengeance. Those who had accepted his hospitality weren't inclined to refuse his calls. Once he had gained entree, he was skillful and dogged at marshalling his arguments. A former Commerce Department official remembers that at one point in Reagan's first term, Gotlieb paid six calls on Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige—one of his frequent dinner guests—while the Japanese ambassador, with an even greater trade deficit, made one. At the White House, he cultivated Meese as his chief contact, and when Ottawa officials came to town, they were impressed at being able to present their point of view at such lofty levels over a private lunch.

When Meese became attorney general Gotlieb focused his attention on Deaver, another of his frequent guests. Then when word leaked out that Deaver was leaving to set up his private public relations practice, a former Canadian diplomat recalls that gloom settled over the embassy. But Gotlieb came back from a meeting to announce with relief that Deaver had agreed to stay on until he had orchestrated the Shamrock summit in Quebec City, where Reagan and Mulroney were to thrash out a compromise on acid rain, the chief thorn in their relations. Deaver's role in that summit has since become pivotal in the Justice Department's investigation of possible conflict-of-interest charges against him.

Soon after the Quebec meeting, the Gotliebs threw one of the first farewell parties in honor of the departing White House deputy chief of staff. No one was surprised when, within six days of Deaver's official exit, he started negotiations to become Canada's $105,000-a-year lobbyist. Those who watched Deaver and the ambassador work together found a natural symbiosis—the one an expert on style, the other on substance, but both with a canny appreciation of the value of public relations and access. Nor were the same observers startled when—long before the Deaver inquiry put their relationship into question—Gotlieb's close friends were predicting with a knowing air that as soon as his term in Washington was up he would join Deaver's public relations firm.

By that time, the Gotliebs' parties had taken on a dynamic of their own. According to sources in the embassy, Gotlieb had calculated all along that to stay a player on the social circuit, his dinners had to serve as more than a ticket for himself; they had to offer some advantage to his guests. In a city where information is the commodity most revered after power, he set out to create a venue for its exchange where he was one of the key brokers. To keep the Powerful Jobs coming, his staff mobilized to think up constant inducements: fashion shows with lunch; film stars Donald Sutherland and Margot Kidder for dinner; a hockey game with Edmonton Oilers' superstar Wayne Gretsky, to which the ambassador—who had to be briefed on Gretsky's identity—invited hockey fans Paul Volcker and George Shultz. But they didn't invite the rest of the diplomatic corps, and embassy officials were

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often only included when there was a last-minute cancellation. Recalls an embassy employee: "The Gotliebs measured their success in direct proportion to how many influential Americans they could get to come to dinner."

As it turned out, so did others. One party, in honor of the marriage of then-Assistant Secretary of State Richard Burt to then-White House Social Secretary Gahl Hodges, struck some observers as odd. The wedding wasn't for another four months, and Burt had a reputation among Canadian officials for appearing scornful of their country's concerns, often greeting them with a sardonic, "So how's your acid rain?" But the guest list for that September 1984 dinner-dance, which included Weinberger and Shultz, is credited with prolonging Gotlieb's career. Despite rumors he was on a hit list that the newly elected Conservative government in Ottawa had reportedly brought with it to power in September 1984, a week later, when the new prime minister visited Washington, he announced that the ambassador would be continuing at his post.

The embassy staff understood that what mattered was not only that the influential came to the Gotliebs' parties but that they were assured their presence would be noted in the *Post*'s social columns. Gossage launched a concerted charm offensive aimed at the "Style" section's assignment editor, Robin Groom, and relentlessly fed Chuck Conconi guest lists.

Still, the biggest attraction remained Sondra Gotlieb herself. Her "Dear Beverly" letters, which the *Post* began publishing on its op-ed page in November 1983, boosted her celebrity to new wattage. According to her husband, the column was also one of the factors in Mulroney's decision to keep him on as ambassador. "It contributed to the image of a couple who had very broad access in Washington."

Sondra has insisted that the column was born accidentally. She had come up with the idea for a book based on a series of letters home to a friend about the arcane rites of the Washington society she had found herself thrown into. Soon afterward, she met Meg Greenfield, the *Post* editorial page editor for lunch at the Jockey Club and happened to tell her about the notion; Sondra's epistolary career was born. "It was sheer coincidence," she says. But former embassy staffers remember much debate within the chancery over whether the letters would have merits as a policy tool to raise the country's profile. A conscious decision was made to go ahead with them, as long as they didn't touch directly on politics, and the ambassador still vets every one.

He is candid about how the column paid off for him. Everywhere he went, especially on Capitol Hill, he found himself hailed by Sondra's fans. Once, when he led former Alberta Premier Peter Lougheed to an appointment with Senator Jesse Helms, Gotlieb noticed Lougheed growing more and more agitated as Helms's attention wandered from the premier's careful exposition on the merits of free trade. Suddenly he interrupted Lougheed to blurt out, "Are you really Husband Of?" A few months later, Helms—who is notorious for shunning the social circuit—showed up at an embassy dinner.

From the first, the columns were controversial. A member of the Canadian Parliament rose in the Commons to protest the propriety of a diplomat's wife poking fun at the social circuit of her host country. And many in Canada objected to the articles on the grounds that they perpetuated the hayseed image Canadians had always suspected Americans had of them.

In Washington, while many followers hooted with empathy over Sondra's depictions of a victim in the same social web that had entangled them, some members of the traditional ladies-lunch circuit privately seethed at finding themselves skewered by Sondra's typewriter. At the *Post* itself, there were rumblings heard that too much of the paper's prime editorial space was being taken up with the social antics of a tiny elite. But the most vicious rumors charged that Sondra had "assiduously" courted Meg Greenfield's favor socially in much the same way that the young Lyndon Johnson had once won the patronage of House Speaker Sam Rayburn—by filling the formidable bachelor's lonely Sundays with invitations to dinner.

Sondra Gotlieb argued that in her columns she was trying to get at "the way temporary power and status react on human beings—including myself." But increasingly, the gossip mill carried news of a change in her that she wasn't recording. There were reports of her rudeness and volatile behavior, of her abrupt departure in the middle of a lunch at the British embassy, of disconnected conversations and remarks that trailed off into silence. In the first negative press the Gotliebs had received in four years, a devastating profile in *Regardie's* recounted how she heckled her husband during toasts and butted her cigarettes in the salt cellar at dinner. Friends began speculating that with her higher public profile had come mounting strain.

Some of those who frequented her salons suggested that the Gotliebs were taking their press clippings too seriously. Said one social scribe:

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"There was a feeling all this entertaining had turned into something that was not so much for their country's benefit as their own." Guest lists for their hundreds of functions a year were reported to have become an obsession at the embassy—personally supervised by the ambassador from a computerized bank of 400 profiles of Washington's power elite. When Mulroney came to town last March on his first official visit, the Gotliebs felt pressure to top their previous triumphs with a stellar roster.

Guests invited to their March 19 dinner for the prime minister by phone were told it was in honor of Vice President George Bush. In fact, Bush had a previous engagement that night in Philadelphia. He had only agreed to drop by the ambassador's residence later for coffee. At the embassy, there were protracted debates about how long to stall dinner in a city where, as Sondra had noted to Beverly, everybody liked to leave by 10:30 for bed. Connor says that the vice-president showed up from Philadelphia just when he said he would, and that she supposes he ate two dinners that night. Guests awaiting him found the cocktail hour unusually long. Tension was growing as an anxious Sondra Gotlieb stepped out onto the front porch to ask Connor, who was scanning the horizon for the vice president's limousine, the whereabouts of Richard Darman.

Thwack, thump. The sharp crack that reporters heard signaled the disintegration of a foreign policy built on the shaky foundations of social networking. The unpredictability factor had finally entered into play.

Some veterans of Ottawa's social scene weren't surprised to hear about The Slap. Least startled of all had been one of Sondra Gotlieb's friends, Elizabeth Gray, the respected CBC Radio journalist who formerly hosted "As It Happens." Years earlier, at a party in Ottawa, Sondra Gotlieb had also suddenly, inexplicably, whacked Gray across the face.

Pitfalls of Peacockia

Parties, Sondra Gotlieb wrote in a description of her life in *Vanity Fair,"* are "the single most useful activity an embassy can engage in to promote its country's interests." But not everyone agrees. "It's a great irony," said former Undersecretary of State Meyer Rashish, "that after five years of being the toast of the town, all that anybody is going to remember is the slap." Indeed, some students of Canadian-American relations are now asking just how much political profit the Gotliebs reaped from playing the social card.

When their dinners and reputations were still flourishing, the ambassador credited his warm relations in high places with winning Canada exemptions from the Reagan administration's potentially disastrous tariffs on steel and copper. "My success is the absence of harm," he said. But when harm came the country's way, in a cruelly coincidental series of events following The Slap, all of his socializing was unable to ward off the blows.

While he was dining regularly with the administration's stars, he failed to pick up signals last April that members of the Senate Finance Committee felt such resentment over their exclusion from the administration's trade policy that they were preparing to hold hostage an agreement to begin fast-track free trade negotiations with Canada. The prime minister, caught off guard, was infuriated by the ploy, which left the agreement hanging by a thread for more than a week—and with it, the centerpiece of his foreign policy.

In Gotlieb's defense, Charles Doran, director of Canadian Studies at Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies, points out that even the administration didn't sense the confrontation with the committee coming. Certainly the ambassador had repeatedly made his case directly to those on Capitol Hill. But a congressional aide argues that the senators' discontent was obvious; the impression Gotlieb left on his calls to them that his administration contacts made Canada impervious to their concerns only added to their resentment. "People here were left with the sense that Canada felt it had the exec in its pocket so why worry?" he said.

But, as events soon showed, Gotlieb couldn't count on the administration's favor either. In the critical week that free trade negotiations began in Ottawa, Reagan signed an order for a devastating tariff on the import of Canadian cedar shakes and shingles to the United States—a gesture of stunning political insensitivity. Gotlieb's administration contacts hadn't given him fair warning of the decision and the lower-level White House officials who might have alerted the administration to the uproar such a measure might cause in Canada had never been cultivated by him. Quipped one: "I'm not grand enough to be invited to the Gotliebs."

Gotlieb's prized—and flaunted—White House catch, Michael Deaver, may also have inflicted long-term harm on the Canadian government, merely by association. Spotlighted in the Deaver investigation, Ottawa suddenly found its historic

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clean-cut reputation sullied by implication in a scandal that had become synonymous with Washington's careless ethics. Some charged that, by lobbying with such a high profile, Canadians had become an interest group like any other. "As seen from Washington, Canada had lost its innocence or virginity," Rashish said, "and now was like the rest of the girls."

Indeed, some analysts on both sides of the border suggest that Gotlieb may have misread Washington entirely. Despite the pervasive symptoms of what former presidential adviser Lee Atwater calls "Peacockia—the need to flutter around and be seen," many of the city's key players such as Rep. John Dingell, who led the attack on Deaver, and Senate Finance Committee chairman Robert Packwood eschew the social circuit.

There had been indications early on in Gotlieb's tenure that his parties weren't bringing the concrete results he sought. Despite his close contacts, he wasn't forewarned when American forces invaded Grenada—a slight that still rankles the Canadian government. When Trudeau launched his controversial Peace Initiative three years ago, many of those who tried to sabotage it in Washington were the same ones who had been supping on fiddleheads and maple mousse at the ambassador's residence. "All the people who had been at the trough turned out to be the ones who took the biggest swipes," said Gossage. In his memoirs of the Trudeau era, *Close to the Charisma*, to be published in Canada this fall, he writes that even as early as 1983, some embassy officials worried about whether the socializing was paying off, although their concerns weren't heeded by a government reveling in its new-found social dazzle. "All the goodwill and visibility we had so painstakingly constructed," he concludes, "really only yielded results in the margins when real issues were at stake."

Even the Serious Press proved predictably ungrateful. William Safire led the attack against Deaver, and Katharine Graham and Ben Bradlee's regular presence at the Gotliebs' table didn't prevent the *Post* from recording the slap or the couple's subsequent fall from favor in colorful detail. Graham was reportedly furious when the "Style" section ran a front-page spread on the social freeze that had begun to descend over the Gotliebs in the wake of the slap under the title "A Big Chill for Canada?" Apparently, in part to make amends, last June she co-hosted a dinner party in their honor at her house with Democratic lawyer-lobbyist Robert Strauss, who previously had been under contract to the Canadian embassy. She was determined to show that Washington was not the heartless, grasping Powertown of Sondra's letters to Beverly.

But as criticism and gossip mounted after The Slap, even the ambassador's friends were surprised to see how badly he reacted. After having charmed the press, he began phoning American officials and journalists he suspected had been questioning his activities and charged them with harrassment. Said an Ottawa official: "He didn't seem to have assessed just how great the cost could be of such a high-profile policy."

In fact, some analysts point out the Canadian government may have had unrealistic expectations of how much could be accomplished with social networking. While a higher social profile can produce introductions and access, there is a danger in mistaking attention for effectiveness. The Gotliebs could win friends, but when Canadian concerns ran counter to U.S. domestic interests, their parties alone couldn't influence policy.

In Ottawa, the government is reported to have decided to leave in place part of the foundations of Public Diplomacy—the direct lobbying of different branches of government. But in the future, no Canadian ambassador to the United States is likely to take as prominent a role in the Washington social scene. Said one Canadian diplomat. "Nobody would have noticed this if it had been the Somalian ambassador's wife." As one of the city's lobbyists notes, some members of the "permanent village" took umbrage at the open cynicism of the Gotliebs' social assault. Diana McLellan agrees that the Gotliebs' social lobbying backfired in part because of their penchant for publicity. "Everybody does it," she says, "but never to the same degree or quite so blatantly. They made the ghastly mistake of saying what they were doing while they were doing it."

The chronicler of Powertown, in fact, may be the least surprised of all about her post-slap fate. Months before it happened, when a Canadian journalist asked Sondra Gotlieb about her plans after her husband's term in Washington was up, she mused that she had no illusions about the friendships they had made there. She said she didn't want to stay on in Washington after forfeiting their Rock Creek Drive mansion, servants, and status. "It would be a mistake," she said. As she wrote to Beverly, "This is a town where status shifts so swiftly that a euphoric Powerful Job who never had time to return his phone calls can easily turn into a decompressing Used-to-be-Close-To whose telephone never rings." ■

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DON'T SHOOT THE AMBASSADOR

Reagan's Central America policy has been to fire the diplomats for delivering the bad news

by Tina Rosenberg

In 1981, Anthony C.E. Quainton was a career diplomat whose continued success seemed certain. As head of the State Department's Office for Combating Terrorism, Quainton had acquired impeccable conservative credentials. When the Reagan administration needed a diplomat to fill the sensitive post of ambassador to Nicaragua, Quainton, though he had no Latin American experience, was selected.

Even though he was Reagan's man in Managua, Quainton's reports often differed from what the administration wanted to hear. Quainton praised the Sandinistas for progress in education and health care, and he insisted the government was more popular and less of a threat to its neighbors than Reagan claimed. When the administration accused the Sandinistas of persecuting Jews, Quainton reported that "no verifiable evidence" had been found to support the accusation.

Quainton was fired shortly after the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, headed by Henry Kissinger, visited Managua in the fall of 1983. "Kissinger was not a happy man after his briefing," says one diplomat in Managua. "He stormed back to Washington saying, 'What's all this pussyfooting around with the Sandinistas?' " Quainton's next post was Kuwait. "And he was damned lucky to get it," the diplomat added.

The diplomatic landscape is strewn with people like Quainton who were punished for speaking their minds. In Nicaragua, ambassadors and diplomats who have brought their superiors information that challenges the Reagan line—even for the purpose of better achieving the president's goals—have risked being labeled pro-Sandinista. Many have been transferred, fired, or forced to resign. The president's policy has been persistent: shoot the messenger whenever he carries bad news.

The problem is that any news, good or bad, that accurately reflects what is happening and how a policy is working, should be welcome; indeed, without honest appraisals from reliable sources in the field, a policy—any policy—stands little chance of succeeding. By forcing out Quainton, his predecessor Lawrence Pezzulo and other diplomats in Central America, the Reagan administration has sent to the field a very dangerous message of its own: the only facts the president wants to hear are those that support his policy. This message has been heard loud and clear. Knowing he can keep his position and what influence he has only if his cables to Washington reflect administration views, Harry Bergold, the current U.S. ambassador to Nicaragua, sends little else. The administration is no longer ignoring the facts; it isn't getting them. As a result, American policy towards Nicaragua is now based on self-deception.

Firing line

Few presidents have let facts, or the diplomats that report them, stand in the way of their policies. In November 1970, the Bengalis of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) won a majority in the country's legislature. The East Pakistani leader demanded autonomy for his country. Pakistan objected and, on March 25, 1971, began a crackdown on the Bengalis. The U.S. consulate

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in Dacca, East Pakistan, reported widespread massacres. "Most of the insurrectionists had already been driven out of the country," said Archer Blood, then consul general in Dacca, the ranking U.S. embassy official in East Pakistan. "Yet the killings continued—large scale killings of Hindus and opposition Muslims. We were reporting all these atrocities, and yet...the president [was] congratulating the president of Pakistan on National Day. We wanted a forthright condemnation of the atrocities."

Richard Nixon was not about to condemn Pakistan, since he was using it to help open relations with the People's Republic of China. That, combined with Nixon's desire to keep Pakistan from tilting toward the Soviet Union, precluded any criticism of its government. When Blood pressed his case in a cable sent to Washington in April 1971, he was fired. "It was made clear to me things would be better if I left Pakistan," says Blood. "I was encouraged to ask for home leave and transfer." Every president has the right to ignore recommendations from the field, and in this case, opening the doors to China was probably of overriding importance. But by firing his consul-general, Nixon sent a signal to the diplomatic corps that he was no longer interested in accurate cables if they were controversial.

For all its emphasis on human rights, similar cases occured in the Carter administration. According to former *New York Times* correspondent Raymond Bonner in his book *Weakness and Deceit*, in October 1979, Robert White, then-U.S. ambassador to El Salvador, sent a confidential cable to the State Department that said, "Members of the security corps, and, to a lesser extent, the Army, have continued to hunt down and kill suspected leftist subversives...the Ministry of Defense has yet to punish anyone, civilian or military, for killing a leftist."

This directly contradicted a letter sent the same month by Jimmy Carter's State Department to Congress as part of Carter's campaign to continue military aid to El Salvador. The letter characterized the government as a "reform government" that "was attempting to control abuses committed by elements of its security forces." White's cables concerning massacres, the government's lack of popular support, and the influence of the military were repeatedly ignored by Carter. When Reagan took office, he did more than ignore White. He fired him.

White's replacement was Deane Hinton, a tough-talking conservative. For nearly two years, Hinton followed the administration line. Then, on October 29, 1982, Hinton, in a luncheon speech to the Salvador Chamber of Commerce, attacked the "mafia" on the right that was destroying the country every bit as much as the guerrillas. Keep it up, Hinton warned, and the U.S. could cut off military aid. Senior administration officials quickly criticized Hinton in the press, and in May 1983, he was removed.

Reagan's Bermuda Triangle

Accurately representing the complexities of the field while faithfully carrying out policy is the balancing act required of the foreign service. This task is always harder in politically hot regions, but never has it been worse than in Central America today. The Sandinistas may be a repressive regime, but the president's views on Nicaragua seem to be guided more by ideology than by facts. In a nationally televised speech in March arguing for aid to the contras, Reagan made several charges unsupported by evidence. He alleged, for instance, that "top Nicaraguan government officials are deeply involved in drug trafficking." A junior aide to the Nicaraguan interior minister was indicted in 1984 on charges of cocaine smuggling, but three days after Reagan's speech, the Drug Enforcement Administration disputed the president's assertion, saying it had no information implicating "the minister of interior or other Nicaraguan officials" in drug trafficking.

Moreover, while the presence of Soviet and Cuban troops is disturbing (there are more Cuban soldiers in Nicaragua today than there ever were U.S. Marines), Reagan's allegation that the Iron Curtain is descending on Nicaragua seems excessive. In 1984, the Soviet bloc supplied $250 million in military aid to Nicaragua, twice as much as in 1983, but still only a fraction of the estimated $4 billion supplied to Cuba. And despite Reagan's claims that this military buildup is offensive, a classified U.S. intelligence report written in 1984 and obtained by *The Wall Street Journal*, states that "the overall buildup is primarily defense-oriented." The report goes on to suggest that the increase in Soviet aid may have been prompted by the escalation of the CIA-backed Contra war.

The administration's insistence on receiving only the facts that support its policy has made Nicaragua, and to some extent all of Central America, a diplomatic Bermuda Triangle. One by one, those in sensitive posts have disappeared.

Lawrence Pezzullo, U.S. ambassador to Nicaragua during the revolution, says that in January 1981, intelligence sources indicated that

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the Sandinistas were shipping arms to the leftist guerrillas in El Salvador. As a result, the Carter administration suspended payments on its $75 million economic aid program to the Sandinistas. After the suspension and diplomatic pressure, Pezzullo says intelligence in early March 1981 showed the shipments had stopped. Pezzullo told Roy Gutman of *Newsday* that when he reported this to the newly formed Reagan administration, no one was interested. Pezzullo says he argued that this behavior should have been rewarded and encouraged; instead the administration cut off all remaining U.S. assistance. After that, Pezzullo, having little influence, retired from the service.

Wayne Smith, the top U.S. diplomat in Cuba from 1979 to 1982, had an almost identical experience. In December 1981, the Cubans told Smith that no arms were being shipped from Cuba to either El Salvador or Nicaragua. Smith reported this to his superiors at the State Department and asked if there was evidence to the contrary. After more than two months Smith got a response that, he says "acknowledged that, no, we had no hard evidence to the contrary, but one had to deduce that the flow was continuing."

Smith says he saw several intelligence reports suggesting that the flow of arms had drastically dropped off. Despite this fact, on April 19, 1982, the State Department announced it was imposing new restrictions on tourism in Cuba because "Cuba is increasing its support for armed violence in this hemisphere." Says Smith, "It was as if we were penalizing the Cubans for ending the shipments." Shortly after this, Smith resigned.

Meanwhile in Nicaragua, Pezzullo had been replaced by Anthony Quainton. At the time of his appointment in January 1982, a State Department official told *The Washington Post* that Quainton was selected "partly on the basis that he's outspoken and is a good, reliable reporter." After two years of Quainton's outspokenness and reliability, Reagan fired him.

Winning battles, losing the war

The result of Reagan's diplomatic house cleaning can be summed up in two words: Harry Bergold. After dismissing Quainton, the president selected Bergold as ambassador to Nicaragua. Other than a one-year assignment in Honduras in 1960, Bergold had spent his entire 25-year diplomatic career in Eastern Europe and Washington. A tough-minded and careful diplomat, Bergold does not publicize his views or speak for attribution. Although he is careful not to publicly criticize American policy, it is clear that Bergold, like Pezzullo and Quainton, quickly developed a different view of Nicaragua than that of the president. "He'll give you an assessment that is light-years away from the administration's version," says Joe Eldrige, head of the liberal Washington Office on Latin America, and who has been briefed by Bergold. "He'll tell you how appalled he is by the administration's reliance on hyperbole."

"We were very impressed with him," says John Ayers, an aide to Democratic Rep. Lane Evans, who met with Bergold in Nicaragua after the Reagan administration announced economic sanctions in the spring of 1985. "We said the policy didn't make sense. He agreed. He said the embargo could be interpreted as an anti-people policy and could well give the Sandinistas an excuse for their failings."

According to sources close to Bergold, he disagrees with a number of Reagan's allegations concerning the Sandinistas, including their involvement in drug trafficking and religious persecution. Moreover, Bergold reportedly disagrees with the president's repeated assertion that the ground is crumbling underneath the Sandinistas. Sources also say Bergold believes the level of discontent with the Sandinistas has far from peaked, and he is not certain people will ever be enthusiastic about the Contras. In fact, according to one diplomat in Managua, Bergold "is too bright to fall for the freedom fighters stuff. He can't say the president is an asshole for calling the Contras freedom fighters, but he can give a much more realistic appraisal than the administration line."

When the administration charged that the Sandinistas were running training camps for terrorists from around the world, reporters in Nicaragua asked the embassy for specific information. According to one reporter for a major news organization, Bergold told him there was nothing to the story.

While his credibility with reporters may have resulted in some stories the administration wants, a protective conspiracy of silence about Bergold has developed on the part of U.S. reporters in the region, who appreciate his critical assessments of the administration's policy. When I told reporters on permanent assignment in Nicaragua that I was writing a story about Bergold, their reaction was practically unanimous: good story, but don't do it. They were concerned that they would lose Bergold as a source and that he might get into trouble in Washington.

If, like his predecessors, Bergold's views con-

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trast so sharply with the president's, why hasn't he been removed? The answer is that, unlike Pezzullo and Quainton, few of Bergold's differences are reflected in his cables to Washington. In Bergold, the administration finally has its kind of man in Managua: a diplomat who will tell it only what it wants to hear. "We don't get the feeling from his reporting or from talking to him that he is out of step in any way," says one high-level State Department official who reads Bergold's cables. "On the things that are important to us, Bergold is not an obstacle. Of course, if he thought we were wrong, he wouldn't necessarily tell us."

"Just because Bergold has been sensibly critical of his government doesn't imply he's advising his government that they're wrong," says one diplomat in Managua.

"I have no sense that Harry is writing stuff they are not interested in in D.C.," says a former administration official. "He's pretty savvy about what the home base will tolerate, and [it] won't tolerate much."

Bergold's predecessors didn't understand this. According to an administration official familiar with Anthony Quainton's cables, for instance, Quainton's reporting was too removed from the administration line to carry any weight. "Quainton became a talisman for those in the department who wanted to turn the policy around," says the official. "But people with any authority just dismissed the cables." While Quainton was ambassador, one official in the Nicaraguan embassy told the *Boston Globe* that "looking at what we report, compared to the statements and actions that are coming out of Washington, it seems they must be using our reports as toilet paper."

Bergold's strategy seems based in a resigned pragmatism. Reagan's policy concerning Nicaragua is set. It is one of the cornerstones of his foreign policy. Bergold cannot change that, but his cautious approach to communicating with Washington gives him the credibility with the administration that allows him to keep his job and win selected minor battles, which is the best he can hope to do.

Imaginary diplomacy

The consequences of this kind of diplomacy can be measured in terms of missed opportunities. Reagan's diplomats in Nicaragua have, at various times, said that Nicaragua is not a threat to its neighbors, that it has reduced the flow of arms to the guerrillas in El Salvador, and that it is not a Soviet puppet. Even if the administration didn't use this kind of reporting as a pretext for reconciliation, at the very least the president could respond to such information in a way that would encourage moderation on the part of the Sandinistas. In 1981, for instance, after Pezzullo reported that shipments of Nicaraguan arms to Salvadoran guerrillas had slowed, the president could have signaled a willingness to reward the Sandinistas for actions he approved of by restoring economic aid. Likewise, had the administration been willing to listen to its own diplomats, it would have realized that the Sandinistas were using some of the administration's aggressive tactics to excuse their failings. That was the message Harry Bergold might have delivered to the administration concerning its trade embargo—had anyone in Washington been willing to listen.

Instead, the Sandinistas have become more extreme, and no one can claim they have moved closer to democracy, pluralism, or non-alignment over the past few years. They have grown more repressive, more dependent on the Soviet Union, and less tolerant of political opposition and private business. At the same time, the administration has failed to overthrow the Sandinistas, or even to make reasonable progress in that direction. While the effects of the $100 million in aid Congress recently approved for the contras will not be known for some time, it is clear that Nicaraguan dissatisfaction with the Sandinistas has yet to translate into support for the Contras. The Contras are poorly managed, fragmented, and militarily weaker than two years ago. They control no land, have no urban holdings, and have lost ground in the northern mountains and southern jungles. While last winter the Contras disrupted the vital coffee harvest, killing around 35 workers and forcing $20 million of beans to rot on the bushes, this year the Sandinistas picked the entire crop without a single incident.

One doesn't have to adore the Sandinistas, or hate the Reagan administration's Central American policies, to appreciate the need to have the messengers deliver accurate information. The policy of punishing people in the field may help explain why neither the Contras nor the Sandinistas are responding to U.S. actions in the way the administration had hoped. The administration has chosen to apply pressures to an imaginary country, whose people and behavior have been constructed in Washington from an elaborate set of prejudices. If the president is not getting what he wants in the real Nicaragua, perhaps this is one reason why. ■

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John Slaughter. Diamond Back/Matt Wascavage

You may have thought college presidents were going to save the NCAA. In reality, they are

FUMBLING ON REFORM

by Malcolm Gladwell

John Slaughter, University of Maryland's chancellor, strode into the college athletics crisis at his school like a newly elected reformer on a rampage to clean up city hall. Only a few days after Len Bias died of cocaine intoxication in June, revelations about academic problems of University of Maryland athletes had hit the press. Five out of the 12 players on the basketball team had flunked out last semester. A teaching assistant, Kitty Saylor, claimed that she had been approached by athletic department officials who asked her to change an athlete's grade last year. One out of every five Maryland athletes had either been given an academic warning or had been dismissed by the end of the 1984-85 academic year. The already frayed myth of the role-model student-athletes and the caring schools that nurtured them was unraveling further.

Slaughter entered with impeccable credentials to attack the problem. Almost a month before Bias's death, Slaughter, as chairman of the Presidents' Commission of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), had announced a new plan to reform college sports by paying attention, at long last, to academic quality. Slaughter proudly told reporters at the time, "I see this as a major development that not only will assist presidents and chancellors in assuring control of their own programs, but also that will reemphasize their desire to clean up questionable practices, in general, in college athletics."

After the Len Bias affair and the new academic revelations, Slaughter was again reassuring. This is what happens when you let athletic departments run amok, he said. "I've had a feeling for a long time that one of the problems with academic advising in athletic departments is that it is managed by athletic departments." Maryland is as guilty of "exploiting" its athletes "as everyone else is," said Slaughter. But he pledged that Maryland was going to reform. In August, Slaughter announced a plan to cancel three to six Maryland basketball games. "We've got some hard work ahead. I hope we will emerge as a stronger, more caring institution."

Slaughter's reaction to the Bias scandal begs one rather large question. Why has someone who over the past few years gained a national reputation as a reformer, taken until now to make any changes at his own school? The scandals Slaughter says he abhors have, by all accounts, been going on for some time. Just last spring Slaughter dealt with an investigation into drug use and shoplifting by two members of the women's basketball team by burying it. The players "will be counseled regarding their future

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conduct," Slaughter said at the time. Almost a month before Bias died, Dick Dull, Maryland's athletic director, was short with reporters asking about the drug situation at Maryland. "Let it sit for itself," he told them. "This has been talked about enough."

Even Slaughter's belated and limited response (he canceled just a few basketball games and didn't touch any other sports) came only after a month long barrage of negative press in Washington and Maryland that was deeply embarrassing to his administration and his school.

The lethargic reaction of the nation's top college athletic reformer illustrates the weakness of the NCAA's entire approach to reforming intercollegiate athletics. The operating principle of current reform strategies is that a college president is in the best position to balance the interests of academics and athletics. But the approach is destined to fail, for most presidents have as much, if not more, interest in seeing a successful—i.e. winning—athletic program as anyone.

Big chiefs, long seasons

Ever since reform fever hit college athletics two years ago, college presidents all around the country have warmed to the idea that scandals are caused by athletic departments beyond academic supervision and therefore the key to reform is to take control of college sports away from the coaches and athletic directors. In 1984, a group led by the American Council of Education (ACE) and Derek Bok of Harvard, suggested that a special board of college presidents be set up within the NCAA with the power to suspend any NCAA rules that affect academic standards, finances, or the reputation of member colleges.

The presidents wanted to take charge. "They don't like the way the NCAA operates," said one ACE official. "They studied ways to reform the organization and finally threw up their hands and said, 'there isn't any way to reform. But we'll have this review body independent of the lobbying that goes on in the NCAA and monitor what it does.' " At the NCAA's 1984 convention in Dallas, a slightly watered-down version of that resolution established the 44-member Presidents' Commission, which has the power to review and recommend action on new rules and rules interpretation.

Commission members swore they had the headaches and scandals of college sports licked. When the group called a meeting in New Orleans last year, college and university presidents turned up in droves, and pledged to pass stiff regulations governing recruiting, amateurism, academic standards, and ethics.

A plan proposed by Slaughter and the NCAA president, Jack Davis, required colleges to pinpoint problems in recruiting, athletic finances, and academic standards. Every one of these measures boils down to a transfer of power from athletic directors to central administrators. The theory is that presidents are less subject than coaches and athletic directors to the pressures that produce cheating.

College presidents are not, however, the great balancers of interests, but rather the chief cheerleaders and fundraisers. "The top 85 or 90 football programs in the country pay not just for themselves but for their school's entire athletic budget," says Chuck Neinas, president of the College Football Association, which represents the largest schools in setting up TV contracts. At Florida State University, the "Big Chiefs" booster club has, in just the last few years, picked up the tab for a student-athlete dorm, three stadium expansions, a swimming pool, a new track, and an athletic center, as well as a $100,000 bonus for football coach Bobby Bowden. When the University of Michigan pulls in $1.5 million for a sold-out football game, it finances a bevy of less lucrative sports programs. The private booster club at Clemson University, South Carolina's football powerhouse, raises about $5 million a year for the football team. University presidents—many of them strapped for funds because of declining enrollment or shrinking government assistance—are not indifferent to this kind of money.

Cynics have even suggested that academic officials have used the "integrity crisis" to get their hands on previously autonomous athletic department budgets. But generally they benefit anyway. Tigers Unlimited, the Louisiana State university booster club, gave the school's administration $500,000 last year for faculty salaries. Bob Heddleston, University of Pittsburgh's athletic fundraiser, points out that "there is a direct relationship between winning programs and fundraising for the entire university." Following Louisville's NCAA championship in 1980, alumni contributions to the school increased three- to four-fold. And Georgetown's 1981-84 stretch as one of the top basketball teams in the country coincided with a $34 million increase in alumni giving.

It is not surprising, then, that the presidential reforms have been little more than cosmetic. Take the plan offered by the Presidents' Commission. Schools are required to file an annual, independent financial audit with detailed information on

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The president of the University of Oklahoma proudly pledged last year to "develop an institution that the Oklahoma Sooners football team can be proud of."

revenues and expenditures for their athletic programs, as well as data on student-athlete admissions standards, academic progress, and the graduation rates. "All of the data will be added to our research base and then will be made public," says Ted Tow, an assistant executive director of the NCAA. He concedes, however, that because colleges have been guaranteed confidentiality, no school names will be mentioned when the NCAA publishes the statistics. So a penalty would only be imposed if a president reported statistics that demonstrated a violation of existing NCAA regulations. But it is not a violation to have, say, only 8 percent of black athletes graduating, as the University of Georgia does or 18 percent of basketball players graduating, as the University of Texas does. So it is unlikely any schools will be punished for their most important failings. Tow admits as much. "If you're talking about moral abuses, like inappropriately low graduation rates, well that's not against any rule so there's not much we can do about it." The "self-study" required by the Presidents' Commission is equally ludicrous. Every member institution was mailed an "Institutional Self Study Guide" with step-by-step directions for self analysis in areas like "Institutional Purpose and Athletic Philosophy," "Finance," and "Student-Athlete Profiles." These self studies are also confidential. The NCAA only asks that presidents give their word that they have completed the report and keep the document on file in the event of an actual investigation.

The NCAA is not about to discover presidents eager to clamp down on those problems. When Jan Kemp's $2.5 million law suit uncovered a persistent pattern of academic abuses and grade-fixing for athletes at the University of Georgia, Fred Davison, the school's president, indignantly stood by the football coach. He told the Board of Regents that the charges were a "myth" arising from widespread ignorance of university regulations. Amid charges of improprieties by the NCAA, Southern Methodist University opened a $250,000 "athletic study and support facility" otherwise known as a "study hall," with rooms for football players to read books, use computers, and receive counseling. But shorten the season? Tighten eligibility rules? "People always say that raising standards will automatically be good," said university spokesman Larry White. "Well that's not necessarily true. Hell, 50 percent of doctors who graduate from medical school fall into the lower half of their class."

The University of Nevada-Las Vegas has taken many of the same steps. "Given all the scandals that have plagued their basketball program," says a sportswriter with the *Las Vegas Review Journal*, "they can't afford not to have their nose clean." Last year President Robert Maxsom, dismissed six football players for misconduct ranging from purse-snatching to burglary. But Maxsom says he opposes any tougher national standards requiring higher graduation rates. "I don't really care for those things," he says. "Hey, we're all working our fannies off wrestling with drug problems. That's not the best way to go."

Those educational leaders who try to take strong action run into a fierce front line: the regents and the trustees. Bill Atchley, the president of Clemson University, lost his job last March when he tried to fire the school's athletic director and reorganize the athletic department in the wake of a drug scandal. The chancellor of the University of Missouri at Columbia, Barbara Uehling, came under pressure from alumni to resign because she picked an athletic director who didn't live up to their expectations. "No other activity in our universities," says Harold Enarson, a former Ohio State University president, "not the liberal arts, not the science programs, and not our libraries, commands such deep and widespread public support."

There is one key difference between the athletic director and the president: while the athletic director has to think only about the win-loss record of the teams, a president must think of the "image" of the entire institution. It's no accident that the leaders of ACE's original reform proposals were the colleges with the most lucrative—and the most corrupt—athletic programs in the country: UCLA, Southern Methodist University, University of Southern California, University of Miami in Florida, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, and University of Georgia, all of which were suspended by the NCAA for recruiting and academic violations. Georgia's Fred Davison was fired as a result of

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the Jan Kemp controversy—not because he allowed corruption—but because he failed at public relations. During the suit, Tom Murphy, the speaker of the Georgia assembly, demanded a speedy resolution of the scandal to "get us off the front pages of all the nation's papers."

The postman dunks twice

The NCAA has taken some actions against troubled schools. Last year, for instance, school basketball star Cedric Henderson and the University of Georgia both were found guilty of recruiting violations. Georgia's coaches were barred from off-campus recruiting for a year, and the school was forced to return 90 percent of its tournament proceeds from the previous season—a total of $254,880.

But the actions haven't been across-the-board. The NCAA's enforcement division polices its 700 member-institutions with 12 full-time and 25 part-time staff members and a tiny $1.9 million budget. The unit is so small that it rarely initiates investigations itself, relying instead on the press to bring scandals to its attention. As a result, the NCAA tries to make a big splash on petty, but clear violations. A few years ago, for example, they nailed UCLA for unlawfully giving a potential recruit a free T-shirt. Earlier this year they suspended Indiana basketball star Steve Alford for posing for a sorority charity calender. In 1982 13 of the 17 schools on NCAA probation were there for what were relatively trivial recruiting violations. And little has changed since then.

Only once has the attention of the reform movement really gone beyond catching wayward boosters and college coaches, and that was in the recent debate over Proposition 48, which passed in January. The bill set what were described as tough new standards for incoming student athletes. Previously, scholarship athletes only had to post a 2.0 high school grade- point average. Under Proposition 48, that requirement was boosted to a 2.0 average in 11 designated "core" high school courses and a minimum Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score of 700.

Those requirements only *seem* sensible. In fact what they do is penalize athletes for their high school records while doing nothing to improve their athletes' education once they've entered college. The NCAA knows this. The association's president, Jack Davis, admits that high school test scores are not an accurate predictor of college performance, "especially among black males." And according to a 1984 NCAA-commissioned study, had the new requirements been around in 1977, 70 percent of black athletes who had graduated or were still trying in 1983 would never have been admitted to college in the first place. The "reform," in other words, puts a roadblock in front of the group college presidents should be encouraging most: athletes with disadvantaged backgrounds who care enough about educating themselves to struggle towards graduation.

The only thing going for Proposition 48 is its public relations value. It allows college presidents to make a strong stand for academic excellence, while imposing no new academic burdens on college athletes. Academic eligibility requirements need not be tightened, schools aren't forced to increase graduation rates, and the issue of educational excellence among college athletes can go back into hibernation.

The NCAA does have minimal course-load requirements and mandates that an athlete be moved toward a specific degree in his last two years. But Georgia took advantage of a loophole that allows remedial courses to count toward degree requirements. Many of Georgia's scholarship athletes were hidden away in non-credit, remedial programs where they were given as many as four chances to pass their classes. On top of that, some were allowed to audit the same course up to three times before actually signing up. That adds up to seven very undemanding quarters—in fact, seven quarters free of ever having to pass a course—and three years of NCAA-approved eligibility.

Coaches and athletic directors are quick to justify this kind of academic fraud. Hale Almond, attorney for the University of Georgia, argued that "we may not make a university student [out of an athlete], but if we can teach him to read and write, maybe he can work at the post office rather than as a garbage man."

Cruel Hoax

The NCAA can never properly address the problems of graduation and educational excellence until they pass strict limits on the scope of athletic programs. Today, the typical college football player spends 49 hours a week during the season preparing for, participating in, and recovering from football games. That's more than a full-time job, and it goes year round. "It's not uncommon," says Allen Sack, project director for the Center for Athlete's Rights and Education, "for football players to start practice in August, play their last game in January, begin pre-spring practice in February, finish spring practice in May,

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and immediately start weight training and running to prepare for August again." Slaughter's plan to slightly trim the basketball schedule is a step in the right direction but curiously doesn't apply to football. Bear Bryant, the legendary Alabama football coach, once said: "I used to go along with the idea that football players on scholarship were student athletes. We're kidding ourselves, trying to make it more palatable to the academicians. At the level we play, the boy is really an athlete first and a student second."

Outside the fraternity of college presidents and NCAA officials, there have been some radical suggestions about how to reform the business of college athletics. Most of them have centered on the NCAA's pretensions toward amateurism. Some have advocated that the NCAA admit that the athletes are semi-professional and pay them. Yet there is a reason to keep trying to preserve the student-athlete. Sports should be bound to the university system as a means of subordinating athletic accomplishment, reminding both those on college teams and those yearning to be on them that their brains are, in the long run, more important than their brawn. If anything, recommitment to that principle is needed. Today disadvantaged groups within American society—in particular the black community—are looking to athletic achievement as a means of social and economic advancement. The idea, says Harry Edwards, a sociologist at Berkeley, is a "cruel hoax." Athletes on high school teams have about a 3 percent chance of getting a college scholarship. Once on a college team, the odds of making the pros drop to 1 percent. Once there the average players play three years. In all, three million inner city youths between 13 and 22 are dreaming of careers as professional athletes, many squandering their educations on basketball courts and football fields. How many more would join them if college athletes were paid?

A better reform might be the one suggested by Rep. James Howard of New Jersey, who introduced legislation last year requiring colleges to graduate 75 percent of their athletes on scholarship or lose the tax-deductible status of donations to their athletes. That would make schools sit up and listen, especially if it were accompanied by an across-the-board limit on playing and training time that would allow real academic work.

Perhaps if these steps were taken, the climate would be such that the president of the University of Oklahoma would have been laughed at, instead of cheered, when he pledged last year to "develop an institution that the Oklahoma Sooners football team can be proud of." ■

THE WASHINGTON MONTHLY

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LEAVENWORTH WEEK

Louis Rukeyser, host of the Public Broadcasting Service's "Wall Street Week," is protesting a recent IRS ruling that he owed more than $400,000 in penalties and taxes because he improperly used tax shelters.

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We've lionized Moynihan for asking the right questions about poverty, even though he's struck out on finding the answers.

BUILDING ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL

by Mickey Kaus

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan was a natural choice in 1985 when Harvard was looking for someone to deliver its Godkin lectures on government—natural in the same way it was natural for Hollywood to invite Lillian Hellman back to pick up an honorary Academy Award a few years ago. Like Hellman, Moynihan had been wronged. She had been blacklisted as a fellow-traveler; his 1965 report predicting the decline of the black family had been hooted down as racist. Unlike Hellman, Moynihan had been right. In the 20 years of polite silence about the black family that followed Moynihan's report, black illegitimacy rates more than doubled, from 25 percent to almost 60 percent. Practically everybody, including most black leaders, now agrees the problems of poor black Americans have something to do with a ghetto culture in which it's considered normal for young girls to have babies and go on welfare rather than form stable two-parent families. The Harvard lectures offered Moynihan a chance to take a bow, and bask in some belated apologies.

Unlike an Oscar winner, though, a lecturer can't say a few mawkish words and then stand there while everyone claps. He has to lecture. Moynihan's talks were awaited especially eagerly by Democrats, who have been groping unsuccessfully for a consensus on what to do about the black family crisis. Perhaps Moynihan, having seen it coming, having spent two decades in public life thinking, writing, and trying to do something about it, had some answers.

To read the reviews, you would think Moynihan's appearance was a show-stopping success. "Who speaks for the center on issues of profound national concern?" asked *The New York Times* the morning after the first Godkin talk. "No one until last night." When the lectures were expanded and published in book form as *Family and Nation*, Michael Kramer wrote in *New York* magazine that Moynihan was "a man who has learned from experience. . .and in our hearts we know he's right." Jonathan Yardley produced a rave review for *The Washington Post*, while James Reston painted a Lincolnesque profile in courage—this "tall figure. . .striding along with an old, battered Irish hat on his head. . .Pat Moynihan thinks with his heart and writes with his fist, but. . .is a trained scholar careful of his facts. . . .No doubt he stuns his hearers with his passion. . . .He knows something about human frailty. . . ."

In fact, the senator's performance was more of the Academy Award variety, as has been the applause of most of his reviewers. In *Family and Nation*, Moynihan takes a few elegant turns on the runway, acknowledges the ovation, adds some self-congratulation of his own, and then with great flair fails to rise to the occasion. It's tempting to say that if Pat Moynihan can't come up with an answer to the intertwined problems of the black family and the black underclass, then the situation is hopeless. But I don't think that's true because, in addition to telling us what's wrong with the family, this book tells us something about what may be wrong with Moynihan.

Policy for Policy's sake

"In 1965 I published in *America* an article," Moynihan tells us in the book's first line. Moynihan almost always takes as his reference point something he published, or an address he delivered, as if the entire public discourse of the

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Family and Nation. Daniel Patrick Moynihan. *Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $12.95.*

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last 20 years consisted of his recorded utterances. The 1965 article was titled "The Case for a Family Policy." Moynihan admits that "I had precious little idea as to what a family policy would amount to but had in mind the example of the Employment Act of 1946. All this legislation actually did was to create the Council of Economic Advisors. Yet it had had far greater impact than any 'jobs bill.' It had declared a *national policy*." Moynihan's fevered italics convey the exaggerated importance he gives to this act. "The mere declaration of policy was an event...The less specific the legislation, the more chances of its having influence...."

What Moynihan is giving us is an erudite version of that Washington staple, the We-Need-A-Policy pitch. The steps are familiar. Pick something important: Youth, Education, Industry—or Family. Point out that various existing government programs affect this something. ("The essence of family policy is that it focuses on the outcomes of *other* policies.") Then note ominously that these outcomes are *uncoordinated*, ad hoc. There is no single agency toting them up. They are still occurring, but they are unplanned—not to have a policy is to have (shudder!) a *de facto* policy. "The only option is whether these will be purposeful, intended policies or whether they will be residual, derivative, in a sense concealed ones." What we need is...perhaps a "family impact statement" on all federal laws. More likely, a single office—preferably cabinet level—pulling together the "principal government programs" from a "family perspective." Bring the concealed impacts to the surface, study them, and well-educated men of good will in high government positions will be able to Make Coherent Policy.

Now, it's surely true that the family has been damaged by the unintended consequences of government actions—the "marriage penalty" in the Internal Revenue Code is an obvious, minor example. But the real beauty of the We-Need-A-Policy approach, for Washingtonians like Moynihan, is the way it lets them jump into the public debate while glossing over nasty questions as to what, exactly, the policy should be. We can leave that detail work to the "policymakers," once we have declared our bold pro-family goal.

That assumes the experts will be able to decide, free from messy ideological biases, what the likely results of various possible policies are. But the debate over the black family is no longer about broad goals—whether two-parent families are a good thing. (Moynihan's won that one.) It is mainly about whether one particular policy—offering welfare to poor single mothers with children—has a major anti-family impact. This possible impact has hardly been "concealed." People have been arguing about it heatedly for decades.

Thus, Moynihan condemns Jimmy Carter's Health, Education, and Welfare secretary, Joseph Califano, for his "routine intonation" that welfare (Aid to Families with Dependent Children, or AFDC) breaks up families: "[T]here was simply no excuse for the head of the cabinet department responsible...not to have mastered a basic brief on his or her programs." Moynihan concludes we don't really know whether AFDC breaks up families, so the conservative solution of ending welfare shouldn't be tried. But when it comes to one of his own pet proposals, raising the personal deduction in the income tax, Moynihan is suddenly quite prepared to proceed in ignorance. "Would recent trends in family structure change...? We do not know. But it is not necessary to know (and probably not possible)."

Moynihan's right the second time. When it comes to the family, the unfortunate truth is we can't be sure what specific policies will strengthen it. But that is precisely why it's not enough simply to declare a "national policy" of helping the family. Declaring national goals is easy. Achieving them is hard. Moynihan says Jimmy Carter "came to office proclaiming the importance of family policy." Yet "in the end he accomplished nothing." What does this tell us about the value of proclaiming the importance of family policy?

Moynihan's initial example—the Employment Act of 1946, the one that was so marvelous in its vagueness—is the most decisive refutation of his own We-Need-A-Policyism. He lauds the Act on page ten. On page 21 he describes his frustration that actual "job creation" was "something just missed in the Employment Act of 1946. It seemed it was always like that." In other words, the Full Employment Act of 1946, while declaring a "national policy" of full employment, failed to have much impact precisely because declaring a policy of full employment is not the same as taking the steps (such as government job programs) necessary to actually achieving it.

That Moynihan leaves such obvious contradictions squatting there in the pages of his book is one example of his most annoying flaw: intellectual laziness. The need-a-policy pose magnifies this flaw, because without a healthy discussion of solutions, the problems themselves remain ill-defined. Moynihan notes ominously that "the United States has become the first society in

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"To ask questions, there it is," declares Moynihan. "The point was not what answers were provided, but what questions were posed," he says. These professorial homilies got to the core of Moynihan's failings as a leader.

history in which a person is more likely to be poor if young rather than old." Sounds awfully significant. But what does it mean? Does it mean we should congratulate ourselves on eliminating poverty among the elderly? Does it mean today's youth are going to hell in a handbasket? Does it imply we should expand welfare? Eliminate welfare? Like the "feminization of poverty," it is a get-up-and-get-a-beer line, an evocatively ambiguous phrase that makes us all feel terribly concerned and knowledgeable but does little to tell us what, exactly, the problem is, much less what to do about it.

Moynihan seems to feel that fuzzy and fragmented arguments are part of his amiably desultory style. He approvingly cites Edmund Burke and Glenn Loury for the proposition that the problems of contemporary blacks "lie beyond the reach of the government." On the next page he vigorously defends "those who advocate a role for government." This is all the more maddening because 15 pages later, in a completely different context, he lets slip a synthesis of the two viewpoints that seems to me so wise as to alone be worth the $12.95 cover price: "The central conservative truth is that it is culture, not politics, that determines the success of a society. The central liberal truth is that politics can change a culture and save it from itself."

The most depressing examples of Moynihan's laziness come when he finally has to face the music and tell us just what his national family policy might *do*, a moment not even he can put off forever. When it finally arrives, in the last 40 pages of the book, Moynihan first recommends an increase in the dependent tax exemption (which would make it easier for low-income families to get by) and an indexed national standard for AFDC (in other words, increased welfare benefits). Both of these may be humane suggestions. But they hardly come to grips with the central dilemma of welfare, which is precisely that compassionate no-strings-attached assistance to husbandless mothers may help sustain a culture of poverty. If welfare subsidizes the decision of teenagers to have illegitimate babies, might not higher benefits make things worse?

This is a possibility Moynihan's breathtaking career as a welfare reformer does not seem to have prepared him to confront. Moynihan started out in 1964 as an advocate of a "jobs" strategy, toying with proposals like twice-a-day mail delivery as a means of creating jobs for black men. As an official in the Nixon White House, he shifted to an "income strategy," unsuccessfully pushing Nixon's Family Assistance Plan (FAP), basically a guaranteed income scheme for families with children. When Jimmy Carter became president, Moynihan, as chairman of the Senate's subcommittee on public assistance, initially called Carter's welfare proposal (which was a guaranteed income plus public service jobs) "a magnificent program." Two months later, after being pressured by liberals and labor officials worried the jobs might undercut wage rates, Moynihan pronounced the plan "grievously flawed." When studies showed that giving families cash might encourage them to break up, Moynihan suddenly announced he'd been "wrong about a guaranteed income! Seemingly it is calamitous!" Instead, Moynihan pushed a welfare bill that would have made no major structural reforms. When Carter proposed a revised plan that also made no structural changes, Moynihan then denounced it as "tireless tinkering."

Moynihan's major activity in this period was whining about fiscal relief for New York. Welfare reform was "still a grand ideal, a noble ideal," he said in 1979, "but the time has come to think of ourselves." During Reagan's first term, with the Republicans now in charge of the Senate, Moynihan pursued no major welfare initiatives. In 1985, despite his previous mea culpas, he introduced another FAP-like guaranteed income plan. He also joined Democratic efforts to expand the existing "WIN" program of voluntary job training as an alternative to a Reagan proposal for mandatory "workfare." Most recently he called for creation of a new Senate committee to function as a "focal point" for "family policy." It will have no legislative authority.

Consistency sure hasn't been Moynihan's hobgoblin. But if there are enduring principles underlying his shifting positions, they would seem to be, first, a desire to defend welfare benefits for single mothers, and second, a belief that the solution to the decline of the black family lies in getting black men, rather than welfare mothers, to

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work. So Moynihan has criticized AFDC not because it *is* available to single mothers but because it is *not* available to two-parent families (as it would have been under FAP). When he has endorsed jobs programs, they have been jobs for ghetto men. In 1965, at the time of the famous report, he even suggested redesigning women's jobs so that men would do them. In one 1977 hearing, Moynihan ridiculed Carter's plan to offer welfare mothers physical jobs such as removing lead paint, weatherizing homes, and conserving national parks.

What Moynihan can't quite bring himself to admit is that extending welfare to two-parent families isn't enough—that underclass culture is now so advanced that young girls will have illegitimate babies and go on welfare even if they could get married and go on welfare. His distaste for making mothers work also inclines him against proposals such as "workfare" that seek to break up the culture of poverty by requiring welfare mothers to perform public service jobs.

Which is why Moynihan-the-author can't help sounding, through the applause, like a tired man who has given up. In the Godkin lectures themselves, he even endorsed the idea that " '[M]ajor reform appears both infeasible and undesirable.' " In the book version, he tries a bit harder. Admitting that even after his tax cuts and welfare increases "the problem of dependency remains," he half-heartedly tosses out a grab bag of unpromising ideas, most of which he snatches right back. He lauds "supported work"—which offers counseling and paid on-the-job training, along with courses in "life skills"—although in a trial this expensive program managed to help only 7 percent of welfare mothers and failed completely for three other underclass target groups. He praises an Urban League PR campaign urging ghetto men, "Don't make a baby if you can't be a father," but he immediately doubts that it will "have the least influence on young men." He demands that the federal government take "responsibility" for fighting drugs (What We Need Is...), then admits that it is probably futile. He calls for tougher child-support enforcement against absent fathers. But how do you get money from an absent father who has no income?

Here Moynihan makes his only promising suggestion: "a federal work program—compulsory when a court has previously ordered him to support his children—with the wages shared between the father and the mother." But he says no more about this idea, failing to think through even the most obvious problems: Who provides the jobs? The government? What do they pay? If the pay is high enough to "share," won't it be high enough to discourage taking a private job? Are jobs available only to fathers? What if the father refuses—does he go to jail? Instead, Moynihan again quickly abandons the idea: "the disorder of the times would likely enough defeat it." But it would still "make a statement."

You can't help thinking that someone who actually *felt* the problem of the underclass was as urgent as Moynihan says it is wouldn't have let it go at that. He wouldn't be satisfied with "statements." Instead, he would tenaciously pursue every lead until he had a program that he thought might work or had proved to himself and his readers that despair was the only course.

Maybe this is too harsh a judgment—the man is a senator, after all, and he says more in this book than most senators say in a lifetime. But I was also reminded of an anecdote in Vincent and Vee Burke's account of Moynihan's fight in the Nixon White House to promote the guaranteed income. Moynihan was flying in a helicopter to Camp David for the final showdown argument. "What's it going to be like?" asked a nervous assistant secretary. "Well...I don't know," said Moynihan. "Whether or not it's accepted, it's going to be social history." This "annoyed" the assistant secretary, who "had not worked for weeks...just to provide social history for a chapter in a Moynihan book."

20 year setback

"To ask questions. There it is," declares Moynihan toward the end of *Family and Nation*, groping for an upbeat note. "The point was not what answers were provided, but what questions were posed," he says. These professorial homilies go to the core of Moynihan's failings as a leader. Questions are fine for scholars, but when it comes

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to governing you need the answers. If Moynihan didn't revel in the graceful discourse of academia, of sifting data, of apportioning flattering praise or deft criticism—if he didn't enjoy so much the sound of his own voice—then he might have made a more strenuous and more successful effort to come up with some of those answers.

Back when he first posed the question of the black family's "pathology" in his famous 1965 report, Moynihan also provided no answers. This "was a tactical advantage," he now claims, because criticism might have focused on whatever it was he would have proposed. In fact, it was a tragic mistake. Moynihan at the time favored a huge federal jobs program. If he'd included this proposal in his report, would it have been possible for liberals to charge (as they did) that Moynihan was racist because he ignored the link between unemployment and black family breakup? Would it have been possible for black leaders to characterize the report as a rationalization for inaction, an attempt to blame blacks for their own problems? Wouldn't a frank discussion of the black family problem have been easier if it had been associated with a positive step the government could have taken to improve things? I don't think it's farfetched to suggest the report might have been embraced by black leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr., who saw the terrible family trends and favored a jobs solution.

Instead, Moynihan restricted himself to a call for "national policy." Then, when he came under fire from the civil rights movement, he launched a desperate counterattack, giving interviews and going on television to explain that he favored employment, education, and housing programs, feverishly attempting to add to his report the last chapter—the one with the answers—that wasn't there. Moynihan's defenders, such as Michael Harrington, attempted to do the same. But it was too late. Black leaders had been put on the defensive about the culture of their community. The topic wouldn't come up again for 20 years.

Moynihan's flaws, then, may have had graver consequences than just the disappointment of his latest book. Without his predilection for questions over answers, we might not be applauding him today for recognizing the black family crisis two lost decades ago. We might have spent two decades solving it. ■

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continued from page 4
mous. Nearly all the anecdotes and statistics your article reports deal only with the overheated market of a few affluent, trendy neighborhoods, not with the experiences of the 80 percent of New Yorkers who live in the so-called "outer boroughs."

While "a simple majority of rental tenants live in rent-regulated apartments," these people do not make up a majority of the New York electorate, which includes tenants in non-regulated apartments, as well as owners of houses, co-ops, and condominiums. The broad support for rent control recorded by the polls must, therefore, include large numbers of people like me who do not now (and often never have) benefited directly from the law.

The record of the free market in New York real estate does not fill one with confidence. At the moment, for example, everyone agrees that "market-rate" (i.e., new unregulated luxury) housing is in conspicuous oversupply. Rather than reduce prices, however, developers have simply increased advertising budgets.

Condominium and co-operative conversions often do not reduce the stock of moderately priced housing. Tenants in residence are protected from eviction and given the option of buying their apartments well below market prices. And reasonable interest rates have brought many co-ops and condos within the reach of middle-income New Yorkers.

HARRY M. MATTHEWS, JR.
Brooklyn, New York

Paying the price

Recently Mr. Peters criticized a case which struck down pretrial detention of some members of the terrorist group, Los Macheteros ["Tilting at Windmills," June]. He called that case one that turns liberals into conservatives. The only people who will be turned conservative by that case were never liberals to begin with.

The Fifth Amendment of the Constitution guarantees that no person shall be deprived of liberty without due process of law. The Second Circuit Court of Appeals came to the entirely reasonable conclusion that the Fifth Amendment prohibits the long-term jailing of people who are not convicted of a crime.

In this case, *United States v. Melendez-Carrion*, the defendants had been held in jail for eight months, and would have been held for another year, while waiting for their trial to begin. Some of the defendants were being kept in jail solely because a judge had determined they might pose a future danger to the community. One of the basic premises of liberal constitutionalism is that being accused of a crime does not make one an outlaw and cause the loss of one's constitutional rights.

It is important to remember what the *Melendez* case did not do: it did not prohibit pretrial detention of defendants who might fail to appear at their trial (in fact, most of the *Melendez* defendants are still in jail, since there is a serious risk they might flee the country); the case did not prohibit pretrial detention of a defendant who might intimidate or harm a witness or a juror; the case did not even bar short-term detention of defendants on grounds of their dangerousness. All that *Melendez* says is that until you have been proven guilty, the government may not keep you in jail for an extended time solely on the grounds that the government thinks you may commit crimes in the future.

The Bill of Rights doesn't come for free. We pay a price for every amendment. The government can't censor political speech; but we pay the price of letting scum like the Nazis march through Skokie. The government can't interfere with the free exercise of religion; but we pay the price of letting demons like Moon enslave the gullible. The government can't imprison you unless you're convicted of a crime. The price we pay is letting terrorists like Los Macheteros go free between their arrest and their trial.

DAVID B. KOPEL
New York, New York

The trouble with tenure

David Helfand's attack against tenure ["I Turned Down Tenure," June]—on the weak side, for there are stronger arguments against tenure that Helfand cannot be expected to make in his anecdotal piece—is one of many we've been getting in recent years, now that tenure-track jobs in universities and colleges have become scarcer.

Helfand makes at least three major errors. To begin with, Helfand fails to see the key to collegial and personnel matters in academia is peer review, that the key to effective peer review is its stringency rather than its frequency, and that in human affairs there are traditional limits to stringency.

Helfand's second basic error is to assume that we can rely on "the kind eye of the courts" and litigation to take care of problems of academic freedom and due process on the nation's 3,000 campuses. Helfand is dead wrong about that. Any lawyer familiar with legal processes concerning academic retention, promotion, and tenure conflicts knows that the courts almost invariably defer to school officials, that only the most egregious violations will be countermanded, and that the whole thing is expensive, time-consuming, and usually futile.

In advocating term-contractual over tenure systems, Helfand falls into a third error. He assumes that by abolishing tenure we will solve problems concerning stale and mediocre professors, poor teaching, overemphasis on grantsmanship, intergenerational conflict in the professoriate, and the like. There is no evidence in the historical or contemporary record to back up this assumption. Institutions without tenure exhibit all these problems.

Despite these errors, there is truth in Helfand's parade of horribles concerning tenure. All of us in the business know that tenure is a flawed contrivance in need of reform. But the most urgent problems besetting academia have little to do with tenure.

IVOR KRAFT
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POLITICAL BOOKNOTES

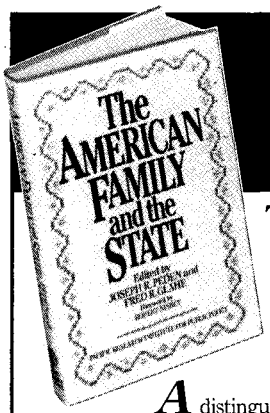
The Straw Giant: A Report from the Field. Arthur Hadley. *Random House*, $19.95. In a news-oriented society such as ours, it's easy to forget how quickly ideas transmute from heresy to conventional wisdom. Five years ago, when a certain regular contributor to this magazine wrote a certain book criticizing the nature, structure, and cost effectiveness of the American military, he was condemned as unreliable and irresponsible (if not an outright fellow traveler). Today, with most premises of the military reform movement widely accepted (if not acted on; that's another story) on Capitol Hill and even within the military, a book like *The Straw Giant* just seems like more of the same. Evidence of Pentagon incompetence? Of billions wasted? Ho hum.

The author, Arthur Hadley, is a longtime military journalist who served in a tank division during World War II and has written on Pentagon affairs for many publications, including the legendary *Reporter* magazine in the 1950s. *The Straw Giant* is a well thought out, careful book that reflects his lifetime of experience. Hadley's primary contribution to the defense reform debate is to detail field-level operational foul-ups, such as the fact that there were *four* officers with the title "commander" at the desert staging site during the Iran raid, none with true authority. Or that Army Delta Force commandos could talk directly to the White House but not to the Marine or Air Force units involved in the operation, or even to Rangers (from the same service, but a separate hierarchy) guarding the site perimeter.

His chapter on the attempted raid is among the best accounts of this sad event, partly because he understands the position of the soldiers involved and places the blame on the command chain, not on individuals in the field. He is kinder than most commentators to the Marine helicopter pilots. Though they performed poorly, Hadley sympathizes with the physical and mental strain they endured flying helicopters 500 miles in the dark at treetop level—it's like driving 70 miles per hour at night without headlights—and mainly faults the committee mind-set of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The JCS penciled in Marine pilots who had never trained for long-range flight in order to give each service a piece of the action. Air Force and Army pilots with the requisite training were available but passed over. (In retrospect it's amazing the Coast Guard and the U.S. Forest Service didn't wheedle their way into the mission, too.)

The Marine pilots, Hadley says, were trained exclusively in clear weather. A CIA report of sandstorms—which is what they encountered, making the effort more comparable to driving 70 miles per hour without headlights through a blizzard—was never forwarded to them. Nor, Hadley says, were the Marines told they were flying a path that followed holes in the Iranian radar system, meaning that they could have safely risen above the storm. Instead they continued to hug the ground, the sand chewing up fragile helicopter parts that ultimately failed, and pushing themselves to a state of nervous exhaustion. Finally, Hadley notes, because the Marines could not communicate with other services, "there was no way for them to learn that the dust storm would end after roughly an hour and that at Desert One it was a relatively clear and starlit night."

Sympathy for such unglamorous realities faced by grunts comes from Hadley's having personal familiarity with field conditions; his knowledge seasons a topic too often presented in terms of clean, neat data. *The Straw Giant* is less convincing when the author attempts to make a case that an "accuracy revolution" brought on by precision-guided weapons has fundamentally altered the nature of warfare. Many categories of weapons have become more accurate, but for all his skepticism in other areas, Hadley takes perfor-



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mance claims about precision weapons at near face value. After criticizing the ability of interservice factions to cooperate with each other on rudimentary matters, he glides past the complication that many smart munitions can function only with split-second coordination among distant units. The Army's new Hellfire antitank missile is launched from a helicopter but controlled by another aircraft or troops at the front; the slightest breakdown in synchronization will send the missle humming off into the wild blue yonder.

For the Libya raid—which was staged at a time and place of our choosing, after months of preparation and against lightly defended targets—the Pentagon employed the smartest weapons at its disposal. Results were mixed at best. Several bombers turned back because their ground sensors couldn't lock on targets, and of the weapons fired it appears roughly half hit what they were aimed at. This doesn't diminish the courage or skill shown by U.S. forces during the raid, but it offers another caution against thinking weapons have become smarter than the people operating them. (Nor does it mean precision weapons will never become truly effective. Computers and sensors continue to improve, and it's entirely possible that an unstoppable combination will someday be developed.)

Along the same lines, *The Straw Giant* loses touch with the ground when Hadley predicts, "There appears to be a ddistinct possibility that within ten years we can protect a limited number of missile silos with a system of charged [particle] beams at heavy but not prohibitive expense." Charged particle beams (essentially, lasers firing matter rather than energy) haven't worked yet in laboratory conditions; the notion of operational beam cannons within a decade seems remote.

What's the next step for defense reform? No more evidence is required: books like *National Defense, The Pentagon and the Art of War* by Edward Luttwak, and now *The Straw Giant* provide all one could ask. What's needed is the willingness to translate reform suggestions to reality. A few encouraging signs exist. The Army has reformed its internal organization to increase unit cohesion, and made its training more realistic; the Air Force and Naval aviation are grudgingly substituting reliability for mega performance; the Senate has unanimously passed Barry Goldwater's JCS reorganization bill. Still, one suspects that within the Pentagon, generals and admirals who five years ago would have gone berserk over the mere existence of books like *The Straw Giant* are now reading them, nodding in secret agreement, and going back to business as usual. Comprehensive reform is not likely until we have a president and a secretary of defense who aren't afraid to say the magic word "No."

—*Gregg Easterbrook*

Beyond Appearance: Reflections of a Plastic Surgeon. Dr. Robert Goldwyn. *Dodd, Mead, $16.95.* Last December, William Geist of *The New York Times* did an "About New York" column on the holiday crush in the office of a "while-u-wait" plastic surgeon. It was a nightmare glimpse of decadence. Women bought bathing suits that didn't fit, wore them to the doctor's office, and commanded the surgeon to "get rid of everything bad that shows." Some bought ball gowns with plunging necklines and large bodices, then went to the doctor for the cleavage to fill them up. Women debated having their eyeliner tattooed on, an operation which, once the scabs and bruises heal, spares the wearer the worries of smudged makeup. Men and women alike brought in torn-out magazine pages with faces they wanted. Others just needed the excess fat sucked out from under their skin through a rubber hose.

Now from the same grotesque world comes a saner and meeker voice—a plastic surgeon who, though serious about his profession, admits that it is more "cosmetic" than therapeutic as he sets out to explore the contradictions and rationales of this hybrid form of medicine. Robert Goldwyn, who has spent his professional life as a surgeon at a Harvard teaching hospital, is a moderate compared to Geist's mad redesigner of flesh. He doesn't operate in his office or on a patient's whim, and he tries, for example, to discourage women from having breast-enlargement surgery just because their husbands want them to. On the other hand, he sees nothing peculiar about the beautiful, paranoid woman who makes an appointment with him every year to scrutinize "before" pictures for signs of aging—only to leave in great disappointment each time it turns out she has not sagged enough yet for a facelift.

Goldwyn defends his work while grappling seriously, if not conclusively, with its assumptions. Why, he wonders repeatedly, does society put such value on beauty in women

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(85 percent of his patients are female) that they are willing to risk their health for small temporary gains? Is the fixation on beauty to humanity's credit (an "aesthetic sense"), or merely a way to objectify and enslave? Admitting his own preoccupation with appearance doesn't save him from inconsistencies or absurdities. He hopes his daughters will escape the tyranny of appearance that makes women "sacrificial lambs," yet admits that "as a plastic surgeon...I both answer that need and create it."

Goldwyn covers well the medical profession as a whole, describing at length current health issues and the sociology of hospitals. For example, Goldwyn takes a strong stand on the malpractice scare, arguing that "at the risk of alienating my medical colleagues, I think the presence of attorneys and the threat of malpractice have upgraded what our patients receive." He repeatedly cites possible lawsuits as the reason for taking time on some tedious "detail" of good care, such as keeping good operating records, or making sure that an unconscious patient is not lying in a position that will give him bedsores.

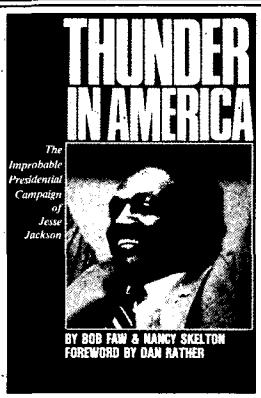
Goldwyn's clear and confident view of the medical profession as a whole only makes him agonize more over the peculiarity of his own service. He is quite certain he really does make people happy; he is the "dream dispenser" who frees people magically from the prison of unlucky birth, something no society has ever before had the ability to do. And yet he remains puzzled that, while most surgical patients come unwillingly or with little choice to surgeons in search of health, his own patients are willing—often recklessly so—to risk their health in return for the evanescence of better looks. Is it his fault, or theirs, if people seem unable to realize that nature and death, surgery and healing, involve imponderables—if they, in fact, adopt a "shopping mall" attitude toward their bodies?

—*Amy E. Schwartz*

The Overburdened Economy. Lloyd J. Dumas. *University of California Press, $18.95.* Lloyd Dumas is a professor of economics at the University of Texas in Dallas, which is part of an educational system that, especially at Austin, has been insufficiently celebrated for its initiative and independence in economic thought over the last 50 years. Robert Montgomery, Clarence Ayres, and Edward Everett Hale set a nation-wide example in pursuit of relevant and often inconvenient truth. This dense, original, competent, and plain-spoken book is in that tradition.

After looking at the American industrial decline, Dumas takes effective issue with those who espouse the commonly cited solutions or evasions: those who think that our genius in financial management, mergers and acquisitions, and paper entrepreneurship is our solution; those who say that the future lies with "high-tech" industries, in which we are already in a trade-deficit relationship with the Japanese; those who see services—low-wage employment serving junk foods—as the next natural step in our economic development.

Instead he divides economic activity into three categories—contributive, neutral and intrusive. After saying, in the tradition of Thorstein Veblen, that these terms are value-free and purely scientific



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TexasMonthlyPress

Thunder in America
The Improbable Presidential Campaign of Jesse Jackson
by Bob Faw and Nancy Skelton
Foreword by Dan Rather
$16.95 cloth

America had never seen anything quite like Jesse Jackson. He was "Thunder" to the Secret Service, "Reverend" to staff members, "one hundred and ninety pounds of intellectual dynamite . . . a bad dude . . . our savior" to adoring congregations, and a grand-standing Elmer Gantry to his detractors. Jesse Jackson's campaign was both doomed and glorious, both a success and a failure.

Bob Faw has been a correspondent for CBS News since 1980. In 1984 he received an Emmy from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for his coverage of the Jackson campaign. The late Nancy Skelton was a staff writer for the *Los Angeles Times*.

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in mood, he goes on to argue the contrary with no slight energy. Contributive resource use consists, broadly speaking, of those employments of capital and labor that serve the wants and desires, public and private, of people at large. Neutral employments neither add to nor subtract from such service. Intrusive resource use is a flat subtraction therefrom.

The epitome of neutral resource use, neither contributing nor damaging, is the modern managerial exfoliation, public and private, which Dumas examines at length. Management, having the decisive power in the modern great corporation within a tolerant constraining structure, relentlessly multiplies its own numbers and privileges. Those so employed, in a manner of speaking, neither add to nor subtract from serviceable production. Their comfortable redundancy is indicated by the recurrent sacking of hundreds or thousands of white-collar and managerial personnel in the interest, it is always said, of greater efficiency.

Intrusive resource use is not passive; it subtracts from overall well-being. This it does by seizing on manpower, intelligence and capital and taking them away from public use. Its manifestation of dominant, even massive, importance is the military establishment, which reaches into the economy for the capital, labor, and especially the technological skills and resources that would otherwise be used in enlarging and improving the production of civilian goods and services. More than any other explanation, this accounts for our industrial decline. Somewhere in the industrial environs of Tokyo, and in only slightly smaller dimension near Seoul, there should be a flower-strewn statue of Mr. Caspar Weinberger.

In his latter chapters, Professor Dumas goes on to consider, perhaps a trifle less persuasively, what would be involved, politically and administratively, in moving resources from intrusive and neutral into contributive production.

No classification of economic activity of the magnitude of Professor Dumas's will be without its critics, and the more motivated technical nitpickers will rejoice. I would be inclined to think him a trifle too narrow in the way he confines contributive activity to visible or tangible, touchable goods and services. Thus he denies a contributive role to some police services—saying that these prevent "undesired redistribution [of wealth and do not] add to the aggregate standard of living." I would urge that tranquility of life is an important part of the living standard, perhaps also contributing to a more effective production of wanted goods and services. He makes a far more compelling argument when he cites the intrusive role of military activity. Star Wars, indeed.

But I make such complaints largely to show this review is a careful and responsible assessment of an extremely interesting, even exciting, book. I urge for it and Professor Dumas the attention they both deserve.

—John Kenneth Galbraith

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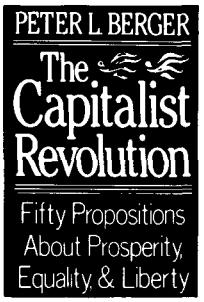

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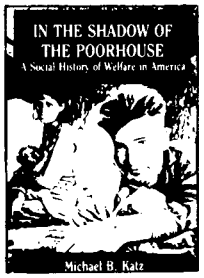

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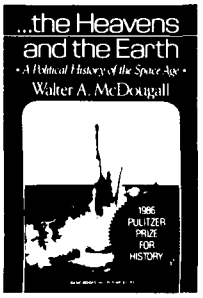

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Unfortunately, not everyone plays by the same rules. There are no industry-wide standards for real estate appraisers. Not yet. But the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers (the Appraisal Institute) has offered its own Standards of Professional Practice as a model for nationwide legislation because we think they are the best anywhere.

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